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THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

EDITOR: H. D. A. MAJOR, B.D.

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THE

MODERN CHURCHMAN

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A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

No. 11. FEBRUARY, 1924. Vol. XIII.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

The Coming Modern Churchmen's Conference.

A well-known professor of theology recently wrote to us that the points at issue between Traditionalists and Modernists are unimportant compared with the difference which separates the Christian view of the universe from that of the modern scientist, and he suggested that Modernists should give more attention to this matter. We are not altogether sure that we can regard the first part of the professor's statement as just—the differences between Traditionalists and Modernists are of a very serious kind—but we are in entire agreement with the practical suggestion that it is the pressing duty of the Modernist teacher and preacher to examine and understand the modern scientist's view of the universe, and see how far it allows any place for the essentials of the Christian faith. Some will ask: What has science to do with faith? Each, like the whale and the elephant, exists in its own sphere; there can be neither hostility nor friendship between them. This view is not justified by practical experience. A truer view of their relation, although as yet unrealized, is indicated in the scholastic title for theology —'the Queen of the Sciences.' This relation is perhaps better expressed by the words inscribed on the front of Pusey House, Oxford, *Deus scientiarum Dominus est*, the Vulgate rendering of the phrase in the Song of Hannah, which the A.V. translates, 'The Lord is a God of knowledge.' The scientific view

of the universe does re-act very seriously on theology, and a theology which is in conflict with science is bound to become discredited as scientific methods of thought prevail in the community. Moreover, if God is really telling mankind one thing through external nature, and quite another thing in the theology of the Christian Church, we ought, if possible, to know clearly why this is so and what is its significance.

It was with some such thought in their minds that the Committee of the Modern Churchmen's Conference have selected 'The Scientific Approach to Religion' as the subject for the next Conference to be held at Somerville College, Oxford, on the 25th—31st August. The list of the readers of papers is an exceptionally strong one, including as it does the following names: Dr. J. G. Adami, D.Sc., F.R.S. (Vice-Chancellor of Liverpool University), Canon E. W. Barnes, D.Sc., F.R.S., Dr. Hadfield, Professor J. S. Haldane, LL.D., F.R.S., Professor C. Lloyd Morgan, D.Sc., F.R.S., Professor E. W. Macbride, LL.D., F.R.S., Professor W. R. Matthews, D.D. (Dean of King's College, London), the Very Rev. Dr. Hastings Rashdall, F.B.A., Rev. C. F. Russell, M.A. (Hulsean Lecturer), Canon B. H. Streeter, D.D.

There seems every prospect of this being one of the most useful of the Modern Churchmen's Conferences.

An Archbishop on the Dangers of Orthodoxy.

As the result, no doubt, of the amazing outburst of obscurantist orthodoxy in America, a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge, Dr. Du Vernet, Archbishop of Caledonia, has spoken in a refreshingly vigorous way of the dangers which arise if traditional orthodoxy be upheld at the expense of truth and love. He goes so far as to assert that 'orthodoxy is the enemy of Christianity,' by which he means that to value correctness of views on theological questions above the fruits of the Spirit in daily life is to be fundamentally false to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is an utterly wrong valuation, and until organized Christianity, whether Anglican, Greek, or Roman, returns to Christ's values there must be endless bickerings and bitterness about things of secondary importance, and in some cases even about things of no importance at all.

The extracts we give from the Archbishop's statement we owe to *The Churchman* of January 19th, 1924.

'There is a growing sense of unreality about much of the conventional religion of to-day. The gramophone discs of old religious phrases are still being used because of their familiar music, but we are anxiously waiting for new records which will better express our inmost convictions.

'It is worth considering why the religious phraseology of bygone centuries is inadequate for this age. Soon after the time of Christ a tendency developed in the Church to exalt metaphysical theology above spiritual religion. This was due to the philosophy of that period which laid the whole emphasis upon the form of thought rather than upon the energy of life. Acute thinkers trained in this old philosophy spun out to the finest degree metaphysical definitions of religious truth, and proclaimed these to the Church as the right view to hold, with the consequence that if a man did not mentally hold exactly this view he was branded as a dangerous heretic, though in his life he might be a loving Christian. To be intellectually and doctrinally right came to be regarded as more essential than to be morally and spiritually alive.

'Bitter controversies and bloody wars in the name of religion are the best proof that orthodoxy is the enemy of Christianity.

'Christ put in the very forefront of His teaching one essential motive: "Love God and your fellow men." He gave one infallible test by which professing Christians must be judged: "By their fruits ye shall know them." He laid the emphasis upon spiritual energy. He knew well that the refinements of theology would make no perceptible difference in the characters of men. There was a reality in Original Christianity which is lacking in Modern Orthodoxy, because the original spiritual impulse given by Christ to the Church has become crusted over and loaded down with dead doctrines.

'The reason why there is such widespread unrest to-day is evident to every earnest thinker. The philosophical foundation upon which the great theologians built up their metaphysical definitions has crumbled and given way. The Philosophy of Forms is now largely discarded, and in its place we have the Philosophy of Life, which endeavours to come into touch with reality. The outlook for spiritual religion was never brighter than it is to-day, because the highest thinking of the age tends to identify ultimate reality with spiritual energy.

'Weary with the bitter controversies of the past, we welcome the tendency of the present to break away from the barren metaphysics of theology and get back to the fruitful Spirit of Christ, which is the Energy of Christian Love. As St. John says: "He who loves not his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God Whom he has not seen."

'The Golden Rule still measures the amount of reality in religion.'

We could wish that all our fathers in God would speak out in the way in which the Archbishop of Caledonia has spoken. We should then get the forces of the Christian Church united and concentrated on the things that matter.

News from the American Front.

The Traditionalist attack on Modernism in the American Church appears to be weakening. It will cause no surprise that Bishop Moore and the Standing Committee of Dallas have publicly declined to prosecute the Rev. L. W. Heaton for heresy. Bishop Moore, in announcing his decision, states that while regarding the charge as 'well-founded,' he is unwilling to prosecute 'in view of the fact that similar interpretations of the doctrine in question are held, taught, and preached by those in our Church belonging to a higher order of the ministry than the party charged.' It seems to us that either the bishops indicated in this statement ought at once to be prosecuted for heresy, or else Mr. Heaton ought not to have been presented for trial. There is, however, no indication of proceedings being initiated against Bishop Lawrence; and Dr. Leighton Parks' challenge has not been taken up by Bishop Manning. In view of this rather tame conclusion, many will deplore the episcopal resolutions which provoked the controversy. We think that to do so is a mistake. A controversy of this kind has considerable educational value: and although no doubt it produces many inaccurate and some foolish statements, yet it also provokes thought and lets in light. It is quite true that, as St. Ambrose says, 'It has not pleased God to save His people by dialectic,' yet public argument has important uses. How much public argument was required to win the Roman Empire to Christ, our great Christian apologists can testify. The broad basis of public controversy which the Protestant Reformation required, is hardly realized by those who have not read something of its enormous literature. We cannot, therefore, in the light of these facts, expect Modernism to prevail without provoking much public discussion.

So far as the American Episcopal Church is concerned, it has not been quick to catch fire. To those who know something of its temperament it may seem surprising that it has caught fire at all: but its neighbours' houses were already alight. The Baptist Fundamentalists have been carrying on a campaign *ferro ignique* to purge their congregations of Modernists—'those lepers of the Spirit,' as it is customary to call them—which for vigour, and, we fear we must add, for rancour, far

surpasses anything in Anglican circles. Public debates before vast audiences are being conducted quite outside Anglican circles by Fundamentalists and Modernists. We cite as an example a recent debate between Dr. Straton (a Baptist) and Mr. Potter, of West-Side Church, New York. The subject for discussion was announced as follows: '*Resolved*, that the Bible is the infallible Word of God.' Some 2,500 persons were present, and many others were turned away. The debate was broad-casted, and all the newspapers contained accounts of it. The New York City newspapers published reports of it on their front page: the Associated News telegraphed a 2,500 word report to 2,000 newspapers, and the Hearst Syndicate is stated to have 'released the story to fifteen million readers.' At the next debate, the subject of which is announced as follows: '*Resolved*, that the Earth and Man came by Evolution,' a hundred seats will be reserved for the press. This means public religious instruction on a grand scale. What the harvest will be it is hard to predict, but it is certain that in the earlier stages there will be more destruction than construction. In the first debate the resolution was negatived. Unless the negation provided a number of positive elements, the result must be regarded as depressing. To be told that the Bible is not what you thought it was, but not to be told what it really is, is not an educational result which attracts the serious educationist.

A Plea for a Comprehensive Church.

Dr. Leighton Parks' notable sermon, entitled 'Intellectual Integrity, or The Equal Rights of Fundamentalist and Modernist in a Comprehensive Church,' we are glad to note has been published as a small booklet[1] at the request of the Vestry of St. Bartholomew's, New York. The sermon brushes aside irrelevancies, and goes straight to the heart of the controversy. The Bishops' Pastoral made a two-fold charge against the Modernists: (1) That not only tradition, but the best scholars are against the Modernists; (2) that unless the Modernists accept the episcopal interpretation of the Creed, they are dishonest. Against this two-fold charge Dr. Leighton Parks defends the Modernists, not with the aim of proving the

[1] It comprises 61 pages including appendices.

Modernist right and the Fundamentalist wrong, but with the nobler purpose of showing that the Modernist has the same right to be counted a lawful minister of the American Episcopal Church as has the Fundamentalist. The Bishops' Pastoral, he points out, is

> 'one of the effects produced by the tidal wave of Modernism sweeping through all the churches; and the attempt of those who call themselves Fundamentalists to check the tide of rising knowledge and as I believe, of spiritual life in the churches.'

The Pastoral itself, as he justly observes, shows evidence of the spirit of Modernism.

> 'The statement that "the Christian faith may be distinguished from the forms in which it is expressed as something deeper and higher and more personal," could not have been found in any Letter put forth by the House of Bishops forty or even twenty years ago';

and he adds, perhaps a little unkindly:

> 'Some of us recall a dictum of the Bishops "in Council," which declared that "Fixity of interpretation is of the essence of the Faith."'

He points out also that the Episcopal appeal to 'the best scholars,' as well as the insistence that the divinity of Christ is not dependent upon miracles, indicates a break with the old orthodoxy.

Nevertheless, the Bishops' Modernism does exhibit signs of 'arrested development.' This is seen especially in their denial of the liberty which they enjoy in the interpretation of ten of the articles of the Creed, to the interpretation of the remaining two articles which refer to the Incarnation and the Resurrection. The Bishops, he maintains, as the result of a comparison of the services in the Ordinal, have an authority in matters of *discipline* which is superior to that of priests, but not in matters of *doctrine*. Hence the Bishops alone may not put forth a statement of doctrine as authoritative and binding. Dr. Leighton Parks asserts that in this connection the 'talk about Catholic tradition is having a very subtle and dangerous effect upon the Church,' and he adds:

> 'If I believed that the doctrine of our Church or my interpretation of it was to be tested finally by the Catholic tradition, I should not waste my time here amongst you people. . . I should go to one who is the representative of a Church which for centuries has declared that Catholic tradition is the final interpreter of the scriptures, and that that Catholic tradition can only be proclaimed infallibly by the Bishop of Rome.'

But Dr. Leighton Parks points out that, according to the Anglican position, bishops and clergy may not rightly depart from the doctrinal tradition which they have inherited unless they are able to show by the Holy Scriptures that another interpretation is justified. It is this re-interpretation of Holy Scripture to-day which justifies the Modernist departure from the traditional interpretation of the articles which deal with the Incarnation and the Resurrection.

It is the charge of dishonesty brought against Modernists in the Pastoral Letter which seems to Dr. Leighton Parks the most serious blot on the document. If the Bishops believe Bishop Lawrence to be heretical, they ought to name him; but if they name him they must try him. And if they dare not try him, then they had better have remained silent. Dr. Leighton Parks in his conclusion expresses the hope that good may come out of the Pastoral Letter and all the discussion which it has aroused. He writes:

> 'If it wake up the Bishops, some of whom are walking in a dreamland, breathing the atmosphere of the Catholic tradition rather than of America; if it lead the people to disabuse their minds of the notion that the Bishops are anything but reverent constitutional officers in the Church; if it lead them to examine more closely the standards of our Church; if it turn them back to the study of the Holy Scriptures, I believe that it will help to the coming of Christ; that He will come to us with new glory out of the ancient tradition, out of the creeds, out of the Bible; and when He comes He will bring us the freedom of faith.'

The Manifesto of the Cambridge Theologians.

Since the reply of the Modern Churchmen's Union and the publication of Dr. Leighton Parks' sermon, the most notable document issued on the Modernist side has been the official statement put forth by the Faculty of the Episcopal Theological School of Cambridge, Mass. The statement is signed by all the Faculty with the exception of Dr. Drown, who is absent teaching in St. John's University, Shanghai, China.

The document is carefully drawn, and will certainly carry great weight with the American episcopate. Since some of the ground which it covers is already familiar to our readers, we do not propose to publish it in full, but only that portion of it which attempts to find a practical solution of the problem: Can Modernists and Traditionalists live together in one

Christian communion, and if so, what must the *modus vivendi* be?

'The problem which the Church faces is not one of opening or closing its doors to those of differing attitude toward the Creeds. It is rather one of excluding many who are already within it. The Church is at present inclusive of varying points of view. Men and women occupying such different positions are at present bound together in the closest bonds of common prayer; they find deep spiritual satisfaction in the same liturgical forms; their worship centres in the Holy Communion as our Church administers it; they cherish the same religious ancestry.

'The fact that these differences exist within the one body does not release us from the obligation to consider earnestly the foundations of our fellowship and our duty towards the formularies in which they are now expressed. As a Christian Church we must share a positive faith which we witness to the world. There must be positive standards of membership and teaching, of worship and discipline. Our existing standards of faith are nowhere closely defined, but clearly include the Bible, the Prayer Book and the Ordinal. The Creeds are but a part of this larger standard. They gain special prominence because they are definite affirmations of faith and because the Apostles' Creed is the expression of faith required at baptism. They are, however, only part of a larger standard, all of which is in force from the strict legal viewpoint. The issues raised by the attitude of some towards the Creeds are likewise raised by the attitude of larger sections of the Church toward the Bible and by the practice of still other sections of the Church in regard to the standards of worship. The strain arising from the use of ancient formularies in days of rapidly changing thought, and the difficulty of giving liberty to the many minds and temperaments within the one body without sacrificing the positive unity of the Church, create problems which all of us must face together.

'Are we prepared for a rigid, even-handed, legalistic application of the whole standard of doctrine, discipline and worship? Such an application of the standard plainly embodied in the Ordinal would bind us to a view of the Scriptures held strictly by few of the ministers of this Church. Presumably the question in the Ordering of Deacons, "Do you unfeignedly believe all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament?" means what it says. Likewise a rigid enforcement of the ordination vows regarding conformity to the worship of this Church would straightway stop liturgical and ritual usages, popularly called "high," which correspond with the beliefs and meet the religious needs of a strong section of the Church. We believe that this inclusiveness should be increased in order that the Spirit of Christ, using many minds and temperaments, may sift out that in all of us which is true and good and saving. But liberty cannot be given in the application and interpretation of one part of our common standards while it is denied in regard to other parts.

'The Church is greater than the Creeds. The central faith in God as He is found in Christ, upon which the Church is built, is not destroyed or diminished by doubts concerning the method of Christ's birth, of His return to God, or of His future judgment. The Church made the Creeds. The Creeds did not make the Church. The Church was and is a fellowship issuing from the love and power of Christ which has shaped the Creeds for its own purposes. What the Church has made it can re-make. Tradition is still in the making; the inner life of the Church is still forcing itself to expression. We do not find the Creeds perfectly adequate as expressions of Christian allegiance, as summaries of the Christian view

of life or as tests of discipleship. To leave the Church because of dissatisfaction with clauses in the Creeds would be to put the Creeds above Christ and His Church, and to pursue a fruitless sectarianism.

'This is not the first time the Church has been confronted with changes in its belief, nor the first time it has allowed freedom of interpretation, nor the first time violence seems to have been done to its formularies. The Reformation brought changes in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, a doctrine which had been established for centuries and which men claimed was found in the Scriptures. The last fifty years have brought changes in the views of the Bible, a book which has been regarded as the inerrant Word of God from the first centuries until modern times. Without prejudging the issue of the present controversy, we are confident that only the Spirit of Christ, giving us trust in God's truth and love for one another, can guide us to saving wisdom.

'In any society, civil or religious, when the formularies in their original intention have ceased to represent the mind of the society or of a large section of it, the alternatives to literal adherence or withdrawal, are interpretation and restatement. In the case of the Creeds interpretation is not an attempt to explain away plain historical meanings, but a discovery, in the only language now authorized by the Church, of the underlying religious meaning. We believe that a large proportion of the Church now finds itself forced to this expedient in the use of various parts of our formularies. We agree with the bishops that such use of language involves serious risk.

'All who find themselves forced to the expedient of interpretation are under obligation to work for greater constitutional liberty and for more adequate terms in which to test and express discipleship. Such liberty might be secured by making the use of the Creeds permissive instead of obligatory, and in the development of alternative forms to be tested by patient experience. A freedom of this kind would secure the effective use of the Creeds by those for whom they rightly have so great religious value without compelling others to whom they present difficulties to subscribe to them in detail or repeat them on practically every occasion of public worship. As the Church throughout the major part of its experience has allowed wide latitude in its forms of liturgical expression, it is possible that it may become stronger and still more Catholic if its congregations are allowed a generous range of liturgical freedom.

'Finally, we urge that the real ground for anxiety on the part of the whole Church is not our divergence over the things wherein we differ, but our half-heartedness in the religious affirmations that we share. At the foundation of our fellowship and at the heart of the Creeds lies the confession of Jesus Christ as Lord, the recognition in Him of very God. Are we prepared to accept in our lives the implications of that confession, to permit Christ to be the Lord of our appetites, the Lord of our relations with our neighbours, the Lord of our family life, of our industrial and business relations? Every man who enters into the religious meaning of the ancient Creeds stands upon his feet and joins hands with the great body of Christians throughout the centuries, and says that he believes in God, that he believes in a Righteous Will working in creation; he believes in Christ, the Son of God, the very life and love of God in terms of our human life; he believes in the Spirit, God working within us to draw us to Himself; he believes in the Church, the fellowship of those who draw their strength from Christ; he believes in forgiveness, the undiscouraged love of God for us which demands an undiscouraged love

for one another; he believes in our victory over death and the life o ever-deepening fellowship. We appeal to our chief pastors to summon u again and again to this faith and to hold us to a strict account in ou sworn loyalty to it.'

A Presbyterian Protest.

The charge of heresy brought against Dr. H. E. Fosdick minister of the First Presbyterian Church, New York, who perhaps next to Dr. Glover is the most inspiring of modern Christian teachers, and is certainly very widely read by young men and women of the student class, has roused the indignation of many Presbyterians. The charge, we are glad to know, has been dismissed, but the recent General Assembly of the American Presbyterian Church has made itself ridiculous by its endeavour to suppress what in its view is heretical teaching. Its action has induced 150 Presbyterian ministers to make a public declaration, called by them *An Affirmation*, with the object of safeguarding the liberty and unity of their Church. In this document they show that their Church does not insist on theological uniformity within its bounds, but admits variation in theological views because it 'subordinates them to recognized loyalty to Jesus Christ and united work for the Kingdom of God.'

Their words on the inerrancy of Scripture are equally clear and thoughtful.

> 'There is no assertion in the Scriptures that their writers were kept "from error." The Confession of Faith does not make this assertion; and it is significant that this assertion is not to be found in the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed or in any of the great Reformation Confessions. The doctrine of inerrancy, intended to enhance the authority of the Scriptures, in fact impairs their supreme authority for faith and life and weakens the testimony of the Church to the power of God unto salvation through Jesus Christ. We hold that the General Assembly of 1923, in asserting that "the Holy Spirit did so inspire, guide and move the writers of Holy Scripture as to keep them from error," spoke without warrant of the Scriptures or of the Confession of Faith. We hold rather to the words of the Confession of Faith, that the Scriptures "are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life." (Conf. I, ii.)

Their declaration on the authority and interpretation of the Scriptures shows that their freedom is essentially that of the English Church.

> 'With respect to the interpretation of the Scriptures the position of our Church has been that common to Protestants. "The Supreme

Judge," says the Confession of Faith, "by whom all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men and private spirits are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture." (Conf. I, x.) Accordingly our Church has held that the supreme guide in the interpretation of the Scriptures is not, as it is with Roman Catholics, ecclesiastical authority, but the Spirit of God, speaking to the Christian believer. Thus our Church lays it upon its ministers and others to read and teach the Scriptures as the Spirit of God through His manifold ministries instructs them and to receive all truth which from time to time He causes to break forth from the Scriptures.'

The Sunday School of the Future.

Those who are interested in Sunday School work will find an exceedingly suggestive article in *The School Guardian* for January 19th, 1924, entitled, 'What will be the Sunday School of the Future?'

The writer foresees the Sunday School replaced by the Sunday House, which is given up to various kinds of religious instruction during the whole of Sunday. The following passages from the article give some idea of the scheme of instruction and the methods of management:

'A boy may drop in for half an hour's reading or self-teaching or craft work any time he likes, and go away when he is tired. If he wants a class lesson he attaches himself to a teacher, and the time is fixed for their mutual convenience.

'Here is the Library'; and we passed through a big hall into what was evidently in former days a day-school class-room. Much of the furniture remained, but the desks, arranged in pairs and turned to face and touch each other, made very creditable library tables. A double row of disused infant desks, placed one above another along the wall, had been adapted, one could see, for a convenient bookcase.

A 'teacher,' with a badge on, sat reading at the teacher's desk. Pictures hung round the walls, also one or two maps, and a notice saying 'Silence is Requested.' On one side of the room hung a row of hooks, with small bags suspended from them. A cupboard stood half-open.

Half a dozen boys and girls sat reading—one boy was going through a set of stereoscopic photographs, another printing a large notice for the Sunday School, a big girl was sitting in a corner reading a poetry book. 'Never very many in here, especially early,' said my guide. 'Too quiet for most—but always some. Amy, over there, always drops in for half an hour's reading on Sunday morning, and sometimes she gets half an hour later on. Folk are packed close in Amy's house. It's her only chance of quiet. There are always a good number on these self-teaching courses. Here is one coming in.'

A boy had followed us in through the door, and I watched him. He went up to a numbered hook on the wall, took down a bag from it, found a vacant desk, sat down, and proceeded to put out the contents: two cards with hand-printing on them, a notebook, pencil, Bible, Prayer Book, and

Self-teaching Guide emerged. He opened his notebook, looked through the Guide, fetched a 'portfolio' of maps, pictures, and plans from a shelf, with a small text-book, asked the teacher at the desk a question, and began to study, sometimes reading, sometimes printing, or writing, or drawing.

'How long will he stay?' I asked.

'Oh! maybe twenty minutes,' my guide replied—'sometimes an hour. He may come back later. You see the rest of them at it.'

By this time another dozen scholars had settled themselves in for self-teaching—some working on the Prayer Book, some on the Bible, some on Church History, some on Foreign Missionary topics. They came and went as they chose, fetching their bags as they came in, and hanging them up as they went away.

'But what about the little children?' I put in. 'Where is the Sunday kindergarten with its stories, and baptism roll, and birthdays, and expression work?'

'Part of it is here,' said my guide. 'Come and see the Picture-room.' We passed into another class-room, evidently once used for infants, as a few little chairs and tables remained. The floor was bare wood blocks, but dotted about over it were small roll-up mats on which some twenty or thirty little children were sitting looking at sacred picture-books or drawing-boards. Two young girl 'helpers' seemed to be in charge; later on their places were taken by two very capable looking boys of somewhere about the same age. Through the door came two small children hand in hand, a three- and a five-year-old, as one might guess. The elder of them picked out two mats from a pile at the end of the room, received a picture-book, pieces of chalk, and a small blackboard from one of the young 'helpers,' unrolled one mat and sat his little brother on it, thrusting the chalk and board into his hand, then unrolled his own mat, sat down on it, and began to turn over the pages of his picture-book. The younger was soon attracted by a big sand-tray at the end of the room, where the other young 'helper' was making a model of some Bible scene, with the eager help of three or four little children.

'But what about these "meetings" you spoke of!' I asked. 'What happens in this big room? What is going to happen now?'

'Well,' said my guide, 'at eleven we have the little children's service. They are getting the room ready now.' And a few young helpers were already busy placing chairs, hanging up pictures, arranging flowers, etc. 'It's quite short, the service—merely hymns and prayers and carols, with a Picture or Nature Talk in the middle of it; and two helpers take part in it—one at the piano and the other at the table. There's a break after it, and the children stay on or not, as they wish, for the Story Hour at twelve. Here you'ld see half the room arranged in small groups, with young helpers telling a lesson story, as in the old days, after a weekly preparation class; if a young helper does not come on Sunday, his children join the 'overflow' group, taken Sunday by Sunday by the leader in the other half of the room. This overflow group leaves directly the story is over; the small groups who have helpers in charge of them stay on for Expression Work—drawing, modelling, or what not. Each child leaves when he is finished—a very considerable advantage to all. Any child who does not want to do Expression Work just runs home when the story is over. Some children only come in for the Story Hour, and not for the preceding service. In old days they were expected to attend both service and story, whether they wanted to or not; hence I understand there were difficulties—inattention, irreverence, and what not.'

'The Lantern Lecture is worked on similar lines; we are turning it into a cinema shortly and saving for films. Subjects: "Whatsoever things are true, honest, and of good report"—sometimes the story of Creation, sometimes the growth of brotherhood, sometimes a missionary district, or the history of an old cathedral, or a series of good pictures. The hall is crowded at both of these with young and old. Of course we don't bother with registers and marks of any kind, and the music covers the noise of assembly and dismissal.'

'Reading, 5 p.m.?'

'Oh! that's for the quiet ones who like to be read to—biography, story, allegory, and a bit of poetry at the beginning. A rota of good readers from the congregation takes that. They never used their *congregations* in old days to help the children—tried to make them all *teach*, and that was hopeless, of course. Why, we have another rota of musical members of the congregation for the Hymn Service—nothing but hymns here, a sing-song once a month in church—very cheerful and always very crowded.

'At 8 p.m. we turn out everyone for the Young People's Sunday Evening Fellowship—a young person must be over fourteen years—and they crowd in directly Evensong is over.'

There is much that is attractive about this Sunday School Utopia, but if it be a function of education 'to learn to bear tedium and injustice with fortitude,' then there seems little opportunity for acquiring this virtue, if virtue it be, in the Sunday School of the future.

THE CRADLE OF LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY

By the Rev. H. J. Trueman, M.A.

IT is a significant saying that our thought of God needs to 'be beaten out on the anvil of the mind,' and that 'we need a conception of God as philosophic as that of the Greek Fathers and as ethically searching as a new social consciousness can make it.'[1] But why? 'To possess and sway our deepest heart.'[2]

We do well, then, to turn back to what is called Hellenistic theology, which was the inspiration for four centuries of the schools of Alexandria and the Churches which drew their learning from that University centre of the cultured world, where in the second and third centuries Clement and Origen presided over the Christian catechetical school which has been compared to 'a denominational college by the side of the secular

[1] Herman, *Christianity in the New Age*, p. 83.
[2] Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, 2nd ed., p. 333.

University.'[3] We turn chiefly to these two great Christian Fathers and to Athanasius of a century later, remembering that 'those who are truly called the Fathers and Founders of the Christian Church were not the simple-minded fishermen of Galilee, but men who had received the highest education which could be obtained at the time—that is, Greek education.'[4] We accept, also, the warning against 'lumping Latin and Hellenic under a common denomination as "The Fathers,"'[5] because the Greek theology 'differs at every point from Latin theology as it received its final impress from Augustine in the fifth century,'[6] and we discover that 'the Greek mode of thought was finally crushed out by tyranny and the leaden ignorance of the age in the sixth century.'[7]

It is, however, the good fortune of our own age to have realised 'that not a little of what is supposed to be modern in religious thought is really the most ancient and venerable of all, and represents, at least in its principle, the primary conviction of thinkers who stand immeasurably above the Latins, with very few exceptions, of the first four centuries,'[8] and it should be an inspiring reassurance to us to know that 'there is hardly a point on which there is a disposition to-day to diverge from the traditional theology, which has not been anticipated by the Greeks.'[9] Moreover, there is such a catholicity and spirituality about the Alexandrian theology and such a large reasonableness, that the strangely similar conditions in our own age 'make its reproduction a necessity.'[10] And we are the more drawn to it when we discover that 'Hellenism was not the special teaching of one school, but a type of thought common to them all during the four earliest centuries';[11] for is it not just such a 'type of thought' rather than the crystallisation of a 'school' that liberal churchmanship aims at promoting? We should like also to think that there is a kinship of attitude and method between us and those early teachers when we reflect that even the strong Athanasius whom we

[3] Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 69. [4] Max Müller, The Gifford Lectures, p. 434.
[5] Allin, *Race and Religion*, p. 129.
[6] Allen, *The Continuity of Christian Thought*, p. 8.
[7] Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 331.
[8] Allin, *op. cit.*, p. 4. [9] Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 34. [11] Allin, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

think of as standing alone against the world shared with his great predecessors, Clement and Origen, the reputation of being 'one of those who had exhibited patience and courtesy in all their dealings, and had tried not so much to force as to woo men from error.'[12]

It has been charmingly remarked that 'Hellenism sat by the cradle while Latinism stood by the cross of the Lord,'[13] and we may look back to Alexandria as to the mother who watched over the infancy of those heaven-born truths which are our dearest possession amid the doubts and perplexities of these far-off days, and as we gather up a few fragments of the ancient teaching and see how native they are to our modern minds we may recall Aliotta's saying that 'he who desires something new desires something old, only he desires it in a different way.'[14]

(*a*) At the outset, then, we notice that, whereas the Latin Fathers were inclined to disparage reason and fear philosophy, attaching much weight to the guidance of authority and tradition, the Greek Fathers rendered allegiance to the Eternal Reason and felt that all that is truly reasonable is really divine. They regarded ignorance as 'the mother of sin,'[15] and we may seek from them the reinforcement of the modern dictum:

> 'We sin the sin of sins only when we turn our back on truth, as we do when we make authority our refuge from the first duty of reasoning men.'[16]

(*b*) In the second place we find that against the Latin view of God as the Judge and Ruler who is always probing and testing men, we may put the Greek teaching which with Clement was his central truth, that life is an education under the immediate superintendence of a Divine Instructor Who is God Himself, so that God was looked on as the great Educator.

(*c*) And so we pass to the Hellenic doctrine of the Indwelling Deity. With Clement and Origen the Divine Immanence seemed chiefly to emphasize 'our nearness to God as an eternal fact.'[17] There was no sort of denial of His transcendence, but Athanasius taught that 'the wise man has no need to seek

[12] Aytown, *City Centres of Early Christianity*, p. 78.
[13] Allin, *op. cit.*, p. 54.
[14] Quoted in Douglas Fawcett's *Divine Imagining*, p. xxiii.
[15] Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
[16] Gwatkin, *The Knowledge of God*, Vol. II, p. 329.
[17] Allin, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

without himself, or to infer the divine existence from the ex
ternal world. He sees God within himself, who is His imag
and as it were His shadow.'[18]

(*d*) From this we pass naturally to the teaching about th
Incarnation. Whereas the Latins could only wonder at it
amazing condescension, to the Greeks it seemed the logica
consummation of a process that originated at the creation. I
was no afterthought, and no violent remedy for an un-looked
for catastrophe, as it was with the Latin Fathers, and her
again we are reminded of how both Inge[19] and Oman[20] in ou
own day protest in identical words against looking on the lif
of Christ as an 'episode' instead of as a 'revelation' of th
constant mind of God, and Herman's statement:

> 'All conceptions of the Atonement which make the historical ac
> of the crucifixion a more important and crucial thing than the vas
> eternal self-donation of God which lies behind it, are not so much a
> obscuring of the loving Fatherhood of God as a spoliation of the ver
> Cross they intend to exalt.'[21]

(*e*, *f*) We must pass by with the barest mention, the valu
able Hellenic teaching about Resurrection and the Eucharis
(a word of familiar significance in daily life with the Greeks
Our Lord's resurrection seemed to them the 'crown and climax
of His saving work rather than the upstanding of a buried body
and beautifully enough they spoke of Death as being for u
'the great Workman taking to pieces that which He has mad
in order to repair its imperfections.'[22]

For Clement the Eucharist was a symbol of the ever-abid
ing presence of Christ, and Origen found in it the only *rea*
because the *spiritual* presence of the Lord, a Presence, a
Clement expressed it, 'in the heart and not in the hand.'[23]

(*g*) And so we may take our last brief glance at these gre
teachings and remind ourselves of how, with all their philos
phical profundity, these wise Greek Fathers recognized th
value of what is called 'the simple Gospel.' It was enoug
they admitted, for humble folk to find in Jesus, the Son

[18] Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
[19] 'The divine suffering is not an episode, but a revelation.' Ing
Speculum animae, p. 23.
[20] Oman, *Grace and Personality*, p. 255.
[21] Herman, *The Meaning and Value of Mysticism*, p. 334.
[22] Allin, *op. cit.*, p. 57. [23] Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

Mary, a Shepherd and Physician, dearly though they themselves valued the loftier vision of the Divine Word and Reason, and we have been reminded that it was the profound Origen who asked, 'What other way could be found more helpful to the many and better than what has been handed down to the people from Jesus?'[24] We find, indeed, these earnest thinkers delighting in their intellectual mountain-tops, but by no means forgetting the dwellers in the valley, and we learn to reassure ourselves amid our own speculations with Gwatkin's fine saying, 'The highest truth may be lived, but it cannot be fully stated in logical form,' and his lovely reminder, 'Narrow thought may be perfectly clear; but on the noblest a summer haze must always rest.'[25]

It seems, then, worth while to turn our attention to this 'noblest thought' which comes to us from that 'favoured moment' when Christian speculation and philosophy were at their best. 'Clement and Origen,' we are told, 'attempted with a wonderful measure of success to do for the Christianity of the third century . . . what many of the deepest thinkers and most loyal Churchmen of to-day see must be done for the Church of the twentieth century,'[26] and Mrs. Herman in her too little known book, *Christianity in the New Age*, pertinently asks: 'Is there nothing in Clement and Origen (and others) that they themselves perceived but dimly in the totality of its implications, and is waiting to yield its hidden treasure to us and to our children?'[27]

One of the best answers to that question may be found in Canon Tollinton's *Clement of Alexandria*.

We are all too accustomed to the appeal to Latin mediaevalism and apt to forget that the Latin Fathers 'transposed the Gospel story into a lower key,'[28] and their theology tended to lower God to man, while that of the Hellenists would raise man to God; and we sorely need to get back to the fearless honesty of those early thinkers.

Max Müller has wisely said:

> 'Origen was as honest as a Christian as he was as a philosopher, and it was this honesty which made Christianity victorious in the third century and will make it victorious again whenever it finds sup-

[24] Max Müller, *op. cit.*, p. 449. [25] Gwatkin, *op. cit.*, p. 94.
[26] Workman, quoted in *Meaning and Value of Mysticism*, p. 264.
[27] *Op. cit.*, p. 16. [28] Allin, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

porters who are determined not to sacrifice their philosophical convictions to their religious faith or their religious faith to their philosophical convictions.'[29]

'Truth is immovable,' declared Clement, and it is encouraging to us to read in one of the latest works on *Christianity and Psychology*:

'A religion abdicates any claim to men's spiritual allegiance if it shuns the glare of daylight reason and draws down its blinds when the noontide sun is up. It is not enough to say of a religion that it is comforting and stabilizing, or that it produces an intense experience. The question that must be faced is—Is it true?'[30]

That was the question the sincere Greek Fathers were eager to face, and Hatch well reminds us after telling of how the Hellenists taught 'an awful and infinite Presence' instead of a God with human form and passions, that 'we may be destined to transcend the assumptions of Greek speculation by new assumptions, which will lead us at once to a diviner knowledge and the sense of a diviner life.'[31] We shall only do so if we keep in mind the precaution of those fearless philosophers of Alexandria who demanded 'the utmost freedom of thought, on condition that it keeps within the teaching of Christ and His apostles,'[32] and is not recklessly offered to the uninstructed; and then, remembering that 'the fortress of Western theology is being attacked with weapons largely forged in the great Hellenistic schools, with doctrines often derided as novelties, but in fact reversions to an earlier type,'[33] we may gladly avail ourselves of those weapons and perhaps shape them to a newer pattern with reverent gratitude for the treasures of that well-stored armoury.

But at the end of all, it is good to recall that while 'the first Latin virtue was obedience, to the Hellenist the first was love,'[34] and since the mystic is the true heir of the highest Greek tradition (which, indeed, never failed to honour obedience to the Divine Reason in its due place), we may well learn from those spiritual Fathers of Alexandria to take as our watchword for all our soul-adventures the saying of the modern mystic, 'It is not with the eye of the mind that we see God, but with the love of the heart.'[35]

[29] Max Müller, *op. cit.*, p. 457.
[30] Barry, p. 124.
[31] Hatch, Hibbert Lectures, p. 282.
[32] Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 182.
[33] Allin, *op. cit.*, p. 159.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 130.
[35] Herman, *Christianity in the New Age*, p. 250.

THE SPIRITUAL POETS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

By J. H. Fowler, Editor of *Palgrave's Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics; Life and Letters of Edward Lee Hicks*, &c.

II.

HENRY VAUGHAN, the Silurist, was only twelve years of age when George Herbert died; but he is rightly known as Herbert's disciple. His own poetry bears strong marks of Herbert's influence, and it was Herbert's example that led him to abandon amatory verse and devote his muse to spiritual themes. At his best the disciple surpasses his master both in vision and in delicate beauty of workmanship. In more ways than one he is the forerunner of Wordsworth, whose library is known to have contained Vaughan's thin volume of poems, *Silex scintillans*. *The Retreat* ('Happy those early days when I') anticipates Wordsworth's great ode on *Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood* in the use it makes of the Platonic doctrine of Recollection, the doctrine that human knowledge is only recollection of truths learned in a previous state of existence. Wordsworth once told Aubrey de Vere that he held this doctrine 'with a poetic, not a religious faith.' I take this to mean that the idea strongly and vividly appealed to him as a support of his religious faith in immortality, though he did not feel that he could produce proof of it either in reason or in revelation: it was a conviction based on his own experience, but he could not prove it to anyone who did not share that experience. Wordsworth's Ode was not really based on Plato, though he was pleased to find in Plato an anticipation or confirmation of what he had felt for himself. Vaughan, on the other hand, had definitely embraced the philosophy taught by the Cambridge Platonists of his day. The love of Nature is another strong link between Vaughan and Wordsworth. No seventeenth century poet—with the exception of Marvell in his *Thoughts in a Garden* and *The Young Girl on the Death of her Fawn*—comes so near to Wordsworth in

intimate sympathy with birds and beasts and trees and flowers. This sympathy is part of Vaughan's religion. It is not merely the creed of the *Ancient Mariner*:

> He prayeth best who loveth best
> All things both great and small;
> For the dear God Who loveth us
> He made and loveth all.

Both Vaughan and Wordsworth have the feeling that Nature apart from Man is in harmony with the Divine Will, and that this harmony should be shared by Man, but has been lost through sin and needs to be recovered. Professor Grierson has noted the parallel between Wordsworth's famous lines:

> If this belief from Heaven be sent,
> If such be Nature's holy plan,
> Have I not reason to lament
> What man has made of man

and such an utterance of Vaughan's as:

> I would I were a stone, or tree,
> Or flower by pedigree,
> Or some poor highway herb, or spring,
> To flow, or bird to sing!
> Then should I (tyed to one sure state)
> All day expect my date;
> But I am sadly loose, and stray
> A giddy blast each way;
> O let me not thus range!
> Thou canst not change.

Unfortunately the study of Natural History makes this view of the happiness pervading Nature no longer possible. In Mr. Hardy's novels and poems the pendulum has swung too far in the opposite direction.

The most remarkable thing, however, about Vaughan is his love of light and the spiritual significance which he attaches to it. I sometimes fancy that, except for a blind man, the glare of modern artificial light has destroyed for us all joy in this particular imagery; perhaps we suffer more often from excess of light than excess of darkness. In earlier centuries the discomfort, to say nothing of the danger, associated with the weary hours of unrelieved gloom in the winter, made men long for light with an intensity that we can hardly understand. One of Vaughan's most famous poems—the one on *Friends in Para*

dise—begins, 'They are all gone into *the world of Light*,' and another opens with the Vision:

I saw Eternity the other night,
Like a great Ring of pure and endless light,
All calm, as it was bright.

Another poem, less known, hardly less beautiful, is *The Dawning*. This begins:

Ah, what time wilt thou come? When shall that cry,
The Bridegroom's coming! fill the sky?

and concludes:

O, at what time soever Thou,
Unknown to us, the heavens wilt bow,
And with Thy angels in the van,
Descend to judge poor careless man?
Grant I may not like puddle lie
In a corrupt security,
Where, if a traveller water crave,
He finds it dead, and in a grave.
But as this restless, vocal spring
All day and night doth run and sing,
And though here born, yet is acquainted
Elsewhere, and flowing keeps untainted;
So let me all my busy age
In Thy free services engage;
And though (while here) of force I must
Have commerce sometimes with poor dust,
And in my flesh, though vile and low,
As this doth in her channel, flow,
Yet all my course, my aim, my love,
And chief acquaintance be above;
So when that day and hour shall come
In which Thy self will be the sun,
Thou'lt find me dressed and on my way,
Watching the break of Thy great day.

Yet he can find God in darkness as well as in light. He has a very beautiful poem on Night, of which I will quote the last stanza:

There is in God (some say)
A deep but dazzling darkness; as men here
Say it is late and dusky, because they
See not all clear;
O for that night! where I in Him
Might live invisible and dim.

The beauty of Vaughan's last lines or last stanzas is often striking. Thus there is the poem on Life, which ends:

But life is what none can express,
A quickness which my God hath kissed.

There is the conclusion of another poem, also addressed to God :

> Thy anger I could kiss and will,
> But O Thy grief, Thy grief doth kill.

And, finally, there is the magnificent ending to that great allegory of the World, of which Palgrave prints only the first seven lines. After the opening, the broad field of vision is narrowed to the world and her 'train'—the world's votaries, the 'doting lover,' the 'darksome statesman' likened to a mole working underground (whom some have identified with Oliver Cromwell or one of the parliamentary leaders), the miser, the epicure, the weaker sort who are slaves to 'slight trivial wares.' The poet wonders at their madness in choosing darkness rather than light, and hears the explanation whispered : '*This ring*'—*i.e.* the great Platonic Ring of the universe which embraces all the spheres of the sun and the fixed stars and the planets—'*the Bridegroom did for none provide but for His bride.*' Here for once the most characteristic and most disputable feature of seventeenth century poetry achieves a triumph that is beyond all cavilling. What could be more audacious than this identification of the great Ring that carries the spheres with a marriage-ring? But the Bride, we remember, stands for the blessed company of all faithful people through the ages, that great host of the Redeemed which no man can number. There is no extravagance of hyperbole after all in a Ring studded with worlds instead of diamonds for such a Bride—only an attempt to convey by poetic suggestion that sense of infinite vastness and majesty which eludes the powers of ordinary speech.

Not so great as Vaughan, yet of extraordinary interest as a mystic and a precursor of Blake, is Thomas Traherne, who was quite unknown to Palgrave when he compiled *The Golden Treasury*, and unknown to our generation altogether till he was rediscovered by Mr. Bertram Dobell. He was the son of a schoolmaster at Hereford, was educated at Brasenose, and took holy orders. As to Plato the ἰδέαι, the thoughts of God, the patterns laid up in the heavens, are the most real things, so it is with Traherne. But this does not make the phenomenal world unreal to him. On the contrary, he rejoices in it with an

exceeding joy as in thoughts of God that have taken shape and become visible to men. But it is our thought, our capacity to share in God's thought, that gives all value to the external world; and by sharing in God's thought, we share in something which will endure when the created world has passed away.

That temple David did intend
Was but a thought, and yet it did transcend
King Solomon's. A thought we know
Is that for which
God doth enrich
With joys even Heaven above and Earth below.
For that all objects might be seen,
He made the orient azure and the green:
That we might in His works delight,
And that the sight
Of those His treasures might enflame
The soul with love to Him, He made the same.

His religion teaches Traherne not a Puritan contempt for the body, but a reverence for it as the beautiful work of God's hands.

These little limbs,
These eyes and hands which here I find,
These rosy cheeks wherewith my life begins,
Where have ye been? Behind
What curtain were ye from me hid so long:
Where was, in what abyss, my speaking tongue?

And so with the beauty of the external world—his feeling for it is like Wordsworth's, or even something more intensely spiritual. To Wordsworth London seen from Westminster Bridge in the hour of dawn wears like a garment 'the beauty of the morning,' and on an evening of extraordinary splendour

A portion of Heaven's pomp is spread
On ground that British shepherds tread.

But for Traherne it would seem that all the ways of men were thus illumined all the time:

How great and happy's he that knows his ways
To be divine and heavenly joys;
To whom each city is more brave
Than walls of pearl, and streets which gold doth pave;
Whose open eyes
Behold the skies;
Who loves their wealth and beauty more
Than kings love golden ore! . . .

Far from accepting Vaughan's view of Paradise as a tradition that had slowly but surely died out among men, he believes himself to be living in Paradise still :

> Into this Eden so divine and fair,
> So wide and bright, I come, His son and heir.

I shall not linger over the Catholic poet, Richard Crashaw, who seems to me to have been praised beyond his deserts. At least I do not find in him the same depth of meaning as in Vaughan or Traherne or Herbert. His most wonderful verses, however, communicate a thrill of ecstatic devotion, as in the concluding lines of his *Hymn to St. Teresa*, or the opening lines of his *Nativity Hymn* :

> We saw thee in thy balmy nest,
> Young dawn of our eternal Day,
> We saw thy light break from the East
> And chase the trembling shades away :
> We saw thee, and we blest the sight,
> We saw thee by thine own sweet light.

My survey of the religious poetry of the seventeenth century has been very incomplete. I have said nothing of Henry King, Bishop of Rochester, a refined and beautiful writer; nothing of Samuel Crossman, Dean of Bristol, whose hymns have individuality, sweetness and depth of feeling; nothing of Giles and Phineas Fletcher, ambitious but uninspired; nothing of Abraham Cowley, whose sacred epic, the *Davideis*, was once esteemed more highly than *Paradise Lost*; nothing of Francis Quarles, the allegorist, though I owe him some gratitude for the pleasure which I got out of the woodcuts to his *Divine Emblems* in my childhood. And of Andrew Marvell, Milton's friend, I will only say that his poem on the Bermudas is the most beautiful record in literature of one of the great episodes of religious history, the voluntary exile of Puritans who were resolved to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences and refused to bow to the tyranny of Laud and the Stuarts. It is a conspicuous instance of the fine taste which Palgrave showed in the arrangement of his *Golden Treasury* that in this collection Marvell's poem follows immediately upon Milton's *Il Penseroso*. The music of the pealing organ and 'full-voiced quire' of that noble ode is still ringing in our ears

when we catch the strain of holy and cheerful thanksgiving taken up, less grandly, not less sweetly, by 'a small boat that row'd along' the shores of 'the remote Bermudas':

> He lands us on a grassy stage
> Safe from the storms and prelate's rage . . .
> With cedars chosen by His hand
> From Lebanon He stores the land,
> And makes the hollow seas that roar
> Proclaim the ambergris on shore.
> He cast (of which we rather boast)
> The Gospel's pearl upon our coast;
> And in these rocks for us did frame
> A temple where to sound His name.

Here, then, my survey must end. Scanty and superficial as it has been, I trust it has availed to show that there is something more than pretty verses or clever conceits in these men. It may take us a little time to learn their language and accustom our ears to their harmonies. Mr. Massingham says somewhere that seventeenth century poetry is not meant for 'week-enders.' But I am sure we shall feel well repaid for any trouble that we take. To parody a famous saying, one could imagine a superior person declaring that if the Christian Church had not had a divine origin, it must long ago have perished from the badness of its hymn books. But though hymn books are often distressingly bad, there is no lack of noble, spiritual poetry, in the seventeenth century at all events, though not all of it is suitable for congregational singing. It is poetry to read quietly, and think over, and read again. Read it thus, and it will be strange if you do not find your spirit kindled by contact with living souls and stirred by a longing to share their 'dower of lights and fires.' For these are men who, living in times surely not less difficult than our own for belief and conduct, kept their faith and courage and aspirations high, and in all humility and sincerity could have adopted as the language of their own hearts the utterance of the Hebrew Psalmist:

> 'Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after thee, O God.'

ARTHUR CLUTTON BROCK

IN Arthur Clutton Brock, who died on January 8th after fluctuating illness of over two years, essential Christianit has lost a persuasive and stimulating evangelist, literature an art a sensitive, penetrating and original interpreter, and man of us a most lively, witty, mirthful, combative, but single minded, tender-hearted, and wholly delightful friend. Reade of *The Modern Churchman* will have seen one or anothe of the appreciations which have already appeared in th daily and weekly press. Those which I have seen have born witness by their tone, as well as by their substance, to the charm and amiability of his writings and character. He was the Arie the Mercutio, the Benedick, of our undergraduate circle at Ne College; full of paradox, of humorous invective, of rich an unexpected metaphor, of a burlesque dogmatism which, how ever, did not fail to reveal the solidity of his knowledge an the delicate justness of his perceptions. In those days art wa easily the chief of his interests, though he reacted vividly t every intellectual and aesthetic stimulus. He was called to th Bar and practised a little; but for many years art-criticism wa his principal occupation, while he also came to take a note worthy, though of course anonymous, position in *The Time* with his articles on gardening and those 'middles' in which h lambent wit and humour played upon all sorts of subjects in style which was always unmistakeably his own. As a youn man his attitude towards religion was mainly negative. H had cut adrift from orthodoxy without having felt the need c any particular heresy. His real approach to religion, whic became a vital part of his later life, was through the strom humanism of his interest in art, architecture, and handicraf a humanism which attached him as an ardent, though indepe dent and discriminating, disciple both of Ruskin and, still mor of William Morris. In this connection it is interesting to notic that his one contribution to *The Modern Churchman* was a admirable article on 'The Message of John Ruskin' in th issue of March, 1919.

The war opened up to him a new field of influence. It not too much to say that the sanity, the 'sweet reasonablene

and the essential Christianity of his war-time articles, particularly in the *Times Literary Supplement*, gave him a very remarkable influence as 'guide, philosopher and friend' to all men and women of goodwill, the simplest as well as the most intellectual, the most free-thinking as well as the devout. He was rather mischievously delighted at the cordiality with which he was hailed as an ally by bishops and others, who seemed hardly to realize how loosely he sat to any form either of dogmatic or of institutional religion. His little book on *The Ultimate Belief* (1916)—a veritably 'golden book' of religious philosophy—was too philosophical to undeceive them: but his *Studies in Christianity* (1918) showed him too clearly in the *Ecce Homo* tradition to satisfy orthodox critics. Perhaps his most characteristic contribution to the philosophy of religion was his share in that admirable volume on *The Spirit*, edited by Canon Streeter (1919). His essays in that book on 'Spiritual Experience' and 'Spirit and Matter' express the theology of the poet and the artist, who must at all costs find due place for Beauty among the absolute values: and not the least part of our loss is that volume on *Christianity and Art* which he had undertaken to write for the Modern Churchman's Library.

A writer who ranged over so wide and variegated a field of subjects and who treated all subjects with so light a touch is inevitably open to the charge of journalistic shallowness: but I believe such a charge does not lie against Arthur Clutton Brock. No doubt he is often paradoxical, whimsical, intentionally hyperbolical: no doubt many of his views and statements challenge contradiction and are open to correction. But underneath all the vivid and eddying surface of his criticism of life there flowed a steady stream of commonsense and a philosophy essentially consistent with itself because it was the genuine expression of his own character and spiritual experience. One dares not prophesy whether in the immense flood of modern literature his writings are destined to survive: but I am inclined to believe that a collection of his essays once made would find a permanent place on the shelf with Bacon, Addison, Charles Lamb, Carlyle, Stevenson and the present Dean of St. Paul's, not for the sufficiency of their substance (for that soon passes into the common stock), but for the idiosyncracy and artistic excellence of their style. N.C.S.

THE SPIRITUAL BASIS OF DEMOCRACY

By C. De Lisle Shortt, LL.D., D.C.L.

DEMOCRACY demands a spiritual basis. The foundation of the new industrial world must be Jesus Christ Himself. If the new world is to be built at all, it must be built by new men and women. New men and women must be born. They do not spring into existence by chance. The pervading failure to recognize this simple but all important fact, is the darkest cloud on the social horizon to-day.

The only operative power which can and will regenerate society is faith in God as unveiled by and in Jesus Christ. No economic arrangement, no political readjustment, however desirable they may be, will succeed in accomplishing this all-important spiritual regeneration, because these problems involve a question of the very life of mankind itself. Unless democracy is born again, it cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. The meaning of the words of the precept which Jesus Christ uttered long centuries ago is quite clear. 'Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you.' The words enshrine a great spiritual truth. They do not mean that men are not to work and earn their living. This Teacher, the Carpenter of Nazareth, was no visionary who overlooked the insistent, if crude, demands of daily life. But, when man dispassionately examines the problems and experiences of life, and calmly balances the credits and debits of life, he is constrained to conclude that the truest and noblest of all objects in life are not material.

Of course we are forced to recognize that all of us must be materialists in this sense, that we depend upon material things for our very existence. But, we have found out the truth of our Great Teacher's words, when He says that the real values of life are Spiritual and Eternal. The highest life is not merely to exist, but to live spiritually, upon 'the meat that endureth unto life eternal.' Jesus expressed this conception in reference to Himself, when He declared, 'I am the Bread of Life; He

that cometh to Me shall not hunger, and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst.' Why should we not speak of the spiritual aims of democracy? Why should we not discuss the spiritual aspect of the Labour Movement? To treat of social and political problems aright, it is necessary to examine the spiritual realities which underlie them. The cynic will affirm there is no such thing as a spiritual aspect of social and political movements, but that is only what we expect. Such an attitude on the part of the cynic or of anyone else, does not and cannot disprove our statement. Political prejudice will, doubtless, lead to the conclusion that things spiritual do not count in this connection. But, political or class prejudice is one of those factors which distort the outlook of men of all persuasions, and so darkens their judgments as to render them incapable of forming correct opinions. Even one of the most clear-minded of the friends of the Labour Movement in England has recognized the fact which we have emphasized above, and has stated that 'in this country it has always set before itself a moral and social ideal' (Zimmern, *Nationality and Government*, p. 227). But we must qualify this statement by limiting this ideal to the noblest representatives of the Labour Movement.

It is a long time since Mazzini defined his conception of democracy, as 'the progress of all, through all, under the leadership of the best and wisest.' But, we ask, is this exposition of the ideal of democracy true? We cannot share the feeling of surprise which Mazzini expressed, when he declared that, 'if anything ever profoundly surprised him, it was that so many persons have hitherto been blind to the eminently religious character of the Movement (*Democracy at the Cross-ways*, pp. 20, 34). No doubt, if the Labour Movement really means, to-day, the uplifting of those that toil with a sincere desire for the welfare of our fellow-creatures, we may say there is a certain religious end in view; but, can we go further and assert, that the great ideal is the social regeneration of the world based on the foundation of the spiritual life?

One fact deserving of emphasis is that the only true basis for all industrial problems to-day is spiritual regeneration. An International Conference of Labour and Religion was held in September, 1919, in the Browning Hall, Walworth, London.

This conference was attended by many representatives from different countries—America, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Finland, &c., with those from nearer home. The object in view was to discuss what is the religion implicit in the Labour Movement and whether they could make it more explicit and more influential in movement everywhere. One most remarkable fact appears as the product of that Conference. The conviction was held and maintained by all those representatives, with singular unanimity, that the real inspiration of all that is best in Labour is spiritual and religious. This confession is important for many reasons.

They have not left us in the dark in reference to their conception of what they regarded as the essential elements of religion. In the forefront, we place the fundamental of the sacredness of personality and of the equal value of all individual human lives as such. Bentham's dictum must be emphasized at all times: 'Each is to count for one and for no more than one.' This doctrine is in complete agreement with the teaching of our Blessed Lord as to the value and importance of the individual. The ideal of Labour must regard men as men and not as cogs in industrial machinery, or as a mere machine whose sole duty is to toil. It must unequivocably uphold the rule of brotherhood as the true law of social life. There must be an ever-present readiness for sacrifice in assisting those who are in adversity or suffering from sickness.

There must be a loud and never-dying protest against the materialistic falsehood that it is a necessary law of nature that the means of livelihood cannot be obtainable for each without internecine struggle, in which the weakest must go under. There must be one great central law of life for all—the recognition of service as the duty of all for each and of each for all. There must be an uncompromising loyalty to the claims of corporate life and, at the same time, a resolute determination to banish all tendencies to disloyalty. It is necessary that mammonism or money-worship should be regarded not only with hostility, but also with the most complete contempt.

The Labour Movement has long placed in its programme an expression of its abhorrence of war. It has recorded its faith in the possibility of attaining to a better order. It cer-

tainly has unfalteringly proclaimed the essential brotherhood of man in its international outlook. If these ideals are not likely to help forward the spiritual regeneration of the individual, the nation, and the world, we do not know what the great essentials of religion are.

These great ideals are spiritual, and essentially religious. They are certainly Christian ideals. We can discover in every one of these ideals, some essential principle of the teaching of Jesus Christ. Whence has Labour derived these principles? They have not come fortuitously! The parallelism between these principles and certain truths of the New Testament is too obvious to admit of doubt. Christ has given men His ideal of what the world should be. If Labour aims at building a world without slums, without injustice, without sweating in any shape or form, without drones, it must concentrate all its energies upon building up a new superstructure on the foundation of moral and spiritual regeneration. None before or after Christ, has succeeded in revealing the infinite worth of the individual's life—of the value of one soul in the sight of God. 'Likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, &c.'

If Labour proclaims as its ideal that not one must needs be crushed or down-trodden in a cold, soulless struggle for existence, it is merely recognizing an old and time-honoured truth, that the inner life of the community, the soul of all things, is good and not evil. Love must be the regulating principle of men's relations in all the details of life. It must resemble the Divine Love in some mysterious way, for 'it is not the Will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.' We have tried briefly to describe what ought to be the ideal of the Labour Movement, and we find that such accords with the principles of spiritual regeneration.

If the Labour Movement will take these principles of moral and spiritual regeneration as the foundation of industrial reconstruction, in the coming New Age, we can hope for the best. The all-important consideration, which is vital to all, when viewed from the spiritual standpoint, is this: the Labour Movement has now reached a critical time, fraught with most momentous possibilities not only to our own nation, but also to the whole world. It is a great turning-point in its evolution. The

crucial testing time for Labour has commenced. It will be tested to its very soul. Democracy is to-day on its trial. We may well view the future with misgiving. A stupendous alternative lies before it. Democracy is destined either to lead mankind up the road of spiritual and social progress towards the realization of its noblest ideals of peace and brotherhood, or—overpowering thought—if it fails to realize its responsibilities and loses its spirituality, to lead its countrymen forward to another and more agonizing and bitter epoch of world-wide suffering and injustice.

One of the speakers at the Labour Conference, a few years ago, recognizing the stupendous moral dangers which lay in front of the movement, declared, 'Unless Labour is wise and prepared to profit by the mistakes other people have made, we may go to pieces as quickly as we have been built up' (Report p. 49). What is the meaning of the various expressions of anxiety which fell from the lips of speaker after speaker, on that occasion? Many, in terms of deep concern and distress referred to the present drift of Labour, to the increasing bitterness which was manifesting itself, to the grave danger of developing materialism, to the debased motives of egoism which are current in the guise of altruism, to the presence of many who are a positive disgrace to the movement, and to the gross forms of tyranny to be found even among the organized workers themselves. Many references were also made to the growing tendency which was becoming so apparent of always getting and never giving, of the growth of a dangerous and soul-destroying form of sectionalism, of the waning of spiritual influences. The whole present tendency of the Labour Movement may be summed up in a few words, by asserting that we behold to-day the reversal of all previous policy in the desire to substitute the principle of force for the idealism of earlier days. These are some of the grave dangers which threaten the stability of all social order to-day. Where can we find the remedy for all national and international dangers? Certainly not in materialism, for materialism has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. There is no alternative but that of building up the edifices of national and international life on the foundation of 'spiritual regeneration.' Chaos or Christ, is the

suggestive title of a great alternative. All the nations have been drifting for a considerable time in the rapidly flowing current of materialism. The experience of the past proves that materialism always has ended in the destruction of all that is best and noblest in the life of the State. 'Unless Labour is wise, and prepared to profit by the mistakes that other people have made, we may go to pieces as quickly as we have been built up.' We repeat these intensely solemn words. They are the recognition of an impending tragedy. Unless spiritual ideals prevail, all the world's best possessions will be lost. Once let the danger develope, and the world will speedily be submerged, not in a thinly-disguised state of civil war, but in a catastrophic upheaval unlike anything ever witnessed in the past.

Other democracies have followed a will-of-the-wisp ideal of materialism, and they have ended in revolution. If democracy should evolve an insane climax of social violence, it will discover, when too late, that material ideals are politically futile, economically disastrous and morally bankrupt. Such a catastrophic disaster, viewed from the social aspect, will prove to be the great break-up of national life, and viewed from the spiritual point of view, it will be the breakdown of every noble ideal in life. A well-known Belgian Socialist, Senator Vinck, who professes to be an agnostic, recognizes the present danger of Labour losing the notion of duty and appealing only to the desire for success. This will be Labour's greatest temptation for the time to come. The influx of worldly ideals and influences always neutralises and will finally destroy, if not checked and overcome, the spiritual life of the individual and of the community. Unless spiritual forces become the paramount influence in moulding the democracy in every country, the outlook is black indeed.

'Industrialism and organization are constantly forcing civilized nations to live more and more by purpose than impulse. In the long run such a mode of existence, if it does not dry up the springs of life, produces new impulses, not of the kind which the will has been in the habit of controlling or of which thought is conscious. These new impulses are apt to be worse in their effects than those that have been checked' (Russell, *Principles of Social Reconstruction*, p. 18).

THE MALINES CONFERENCE*

'Say unto them that daub it with untempered mortar tha it shall fall.'—*Ezekiel* xiii, 11.

THE Malines Conference is the most recent of a series o well-meant but ineffectual efforts to unite, or at least t establish official relations between, the Churches of Englan and Rome. In the seventeenth century Christopher Davenpor an English Franciscan, attempted to reconcile the Thirty-nin Articles with the teaching of the Council of Trent, an attemp renewed by Newman in Tract 90; in the eighteenth discussion with the same end in view took place between Archbishop Wak and certain Gallican divines; thirty years ago an unsuccessfu effort was made to induce Leo XIII to recognize Anglica Orders; and during the last few months some prominent Anglo Catholics have, it seems, approached a distinguished Belgia Cardinal with a view to re-union, the result being that a Con ference on the subject of the relations between the two Churche has been held at Malines. There is, happily, a sense in whic all Christian Churches exercise a common ministry and pursu a common end. And, if we find ourselves unable to worshi with our fellow-Christians, of whatever communion, we hav reason to suspect the genuineness, not of their Christianity but of our own. But unity of spirit between believers is on thing; unity of standards and organization between Churche is another. The reason why this latter unity is out of the ques tion between the English and Roman Churches is not only th patent contradiction between their standards, impossible as th makes it, but perhaps even more their mutual incompatibilit of temper; the two look different ways. The Church of Rom has not the slightest desire to amalgamate with the Church o England, and the Church of England has not the slighte desire to amalgamate with the Church of Rome.

For a certain section of English Churchmen, however, th Church of Rome possesses an attraction similar to that exe cised by the Jewish Church over the first Gentile Churche 'Whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, an

* A sermon preached in Hereford Cathedral on January 13th, 1923, b the Rev. Alfred Fawkes, M.A.

the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh.' But this great Church is as little Christ as it is anti-Christ. It is a mixed magnitude; it contains good and evil; it at once attracts and repels. Its historical record in this country is bad. 'I have been repeatedly warned that to touch the subject is unwise,' says the Primate in his important Letter; 'there exist in connection with it, both at home and in the over-seas dominions, passions which are easily accounted for, but which, when once aroused, are difficult to allay.' It is so. Nor are all the signatories to the resolutions of the Lambeth Conference agreed that, in signing them, they gave a blank cheque to persons unnamed to translate rhetoric into action; and those who see the Papal Church at close quarters make no secret of their distrust of a policy of compromising and uninvited overtures to it. The Archbishop of Armagh's Message to the Church of Ireland is an example; the Irish bishops speak of what they know.

> 'These overtures, or conversations, or whatever they were, are, as things stand, not likely to help us to the only re-union we should desire. It is not desirable that any one Church should absorb the rest; and, if re-union led to the creating of a universal hierarchical system, dominating human life in all its parts, and dictating doctrine and practice with a professedly infallible authority, it would be the greatest disaster which could possibly befall mankind. What could be more fatal for the Church than that it should identify its aims with a system which the world has once for all rejected?'

Like most pronouncements of its kind, however, the Primate's Letter says less than it appears to say. It speaks plainly of 'the great doctrinal and historical issues at stake between the two Churches'; and of 'the historical Anglican position as set forward by the great theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—a position which we have no idea of weakening or changing to-day.' It might be indiscreet to ask whether this position has been explained to Cardinal Mercier; or whether the Anglican delegates at Malines are quite the persons to make it clear to him. But the Primate, at least, regards the discussions which have taken place as tentative and non-committal. They are 'still in an elementary stage,' he says; and 'no estimate can, so far, be formed of their ultimate value.' It must, however, be borne in mind that the key to the position

is neither Malines, nor Lambeth, but Rome. If those who have taken part, directly or indirectly, in these proceedings have left Rome out of their calculations, they are reckoning without their host.

Here, in England, more than one consideration suggests itself. (1) What will be the effect of these overtures, however tentative, to Rome on the prospects of union with the English-speaking non-episcopal Churches—which the Lambeth Conference had mainly in mind? Of these, the Methodist Church, it was believed, was the most open to negotiation. Yet, writes a representative Methodist layman, 'I am convinced that there are few, if any, Methodists who would desire any form of union with the Church of England, if such union involved, or paved the way for, union with the Church of Rome.' Can we doubt that this is a matter on which the Free Churches will be at one?

(2) In what sense can we speak of 'union' with a Church whose claim it is to be the One Divinely appointed Teacher of mankind? 'I beseech you, by the mercies of Christ, to think it possible that you may be mistaken,' said Cromwell to the Covenanters. They would not, the Church of Rome cannot, think this possible. And, in the case of Rome, consistently. For a Divine Teacher, 'union' can mean only one thing: acceptance of his teaching—*i.e.* submission. Such a Teacher does not discuss, or reason, or refute: he condemns.

(3) The Primate's responsibility for what has taken place at Malines is, he tells us, 'full' and 'personal'; he 'did not think it right, or even practicable, to involve others in it.' This individual action was, no doubt, necessitated by the situation. The growth of the Church imposes new methods of administration upon its rulers, who have now to deal not only with the Church of England, but with a very much larger and more heterogeneous body, the Anglican Church. But there is an unmistakeable parallel between the development of the Primacy of Rome in the Church of the Fathers, and that of the Primacy of Canterbury in our own. In each case the result has been brought about rather by circumstances than by design: but in each the development itself was in the nature of things. 'From every cause, either of a civil or an ecclesiastical nature, it was easy to foresee that Rome must enjoy the respect, and would

soon claim the obedience of the provinces,' says the historian. Will the successors of St. Augustine, however personally indisposed to extend their authority, be able to escape the dangerous prerogative which the piety and moderation of a Gregory the Great declined in vain?

To those outside it, the Roman Catholic Church is a *terra incognita*. To those who persuade themselves that anything but misconception and misunderstanding can result from such discussions as these—discussions which are obviously at cross-purposes—it appears to be so in an exceptional degree. Argue as we will, incompatibles remain incompatibles; the circle cannot be squared. 'Blessed are the peacemakers.' Yes: but they must speak the language of those between whom they would make peace. In this case they are sent to 'a people of a strange speech.' Their perspective is at fault; the very conception of dogma is foreign to them; they are strangers to the tradition, the methods, the procedure of Rome. To Rome, dogma is a fixed quantity guaranteed by an infallible authority; a thing which can be taken or left, but not negotiated. The claim to infallibility is, indeed, a shirt of Nessus to the Church which advances it; but it puts this Church on a level above—or below? —that of reasoning. This is an attraction to the intellectually unregenerate, to whom certainty means more than truth. But it makes discussion impossible. That policy enters into the practical application of dogma is true. But policy cannot act as if dogma were a negligible quantity. Only confusion can result if this is forgotten. And the ill-advised controversy on the subject of Anglican Orders, closed in 1896 by the Bull of Leo XIII *Apostolicæ Curæ*, should have shown the futility of these *conciliabula* between enthusiastic English mediaevalists and courteous continental divines. It is not a foreign—*i.e.* a non-Italian—Cardinal, however eminent, but Rome which has the say in such matters; and at Rome things are not done in this way. Rome will never act in any ecclesiastical question affecting England without the goodwill of the Anglo-Irish Catholic body. Why should it? To do so would be to discredit its own agents; who, being on the spot, may be supposed to be well informed, and who have no motive for misrepresenting the situation: in 1896 the misconception was not on their side.

And as it was then, so it is now. The Malines divines are in no sense typical of their respective Churches; neither of the two groups is acquainted with the *milieu* of the other, or can be expected to give a dispassionate account of its own.

Especially is this the case with the English delegates. For, think of it as we will in other respects, Anglo-Catholicism tends increasingly to become 'a little garden close'—a sectarian *enclave*, influential in ecclesiastical circles, but out of touch with the people and the Church of England as a whole. Archbishop Benson, writing in 1894 to a leader of this party, expressed himself strongly in this sense. 'I am afraid that you have lived for years so exclusively with one set of thinkers, and entered so entirely into the usages of one class of churches, that you have not before you the state of religious feeling and activity in England with the completeness with which anyone attempting to adjust the relations between Churches ought to have the phenomena of his own side before him.'[1] The English Church is not the same thing as the English Church Union; and not all its members take either their religion or their theology from the *Church Times*. A National Church, it embraces what is more important than any or all the sectaries whose clamour distracts it—that large and increasing body of English men and women who stand outside the strife of pious tongues, to whom the *parcus deorum cultor et infrequens* of the poet is applicable; but who are neither destitute of nor indifferent to religion, and who see 'the conclusion of the whole matter' in the great words of the Preacher: 'Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.' Here, not in the jarring world of sect and party, is the work of the Church of England. 'Not the righteous, but sinners': her mission is the Apostolate of the Indevout. Can we conceive this pell-mell of men and women gathered into the Roman net? The question answers itself. Such a union of disparates would be like the wall of the prophet 'Say unto them that daub it with untempered mortar that it shall fall.' For 'the wall is no more, neither they that daubed it; to wit, the prophets of Israel which prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and which see visions of peace for her. And there is no peace, saith the Lord God.'

[1] Letter to Lord Halifax—*Archbishop Benson's Life*, p. 511.

GROWTH AND PERPLEXITY

By Canon J. C. V. Durell, C.B.E., Rector of Clapham.

THE coming of the Christian Gospel into the world was the occasion of deep and bitter heart-searching. Men were much perplexed whereunto it would grow. The perplexity was not surprising, for the religious authorities of Jerusalem found themselves in the presence of the mightiest spiritual movement that the world has known. It was the rushing tide of the Gospel of Life bursting into the stagnant pool of Judaism. It was revolutionary in its resistless force.

No doubt it was like leaven working quietly in the meal. But it was also volcanic. It shook men out of their complacency, as cities are shaken by an earthquake. It uprooted their tradition; it exposed the futility of their religion and their lives. It made demands which none had ever dared to make before.

It is not surprising that it aroused fierce opposition. It must be suppressed, as other awkward movements had been suppressed before. So they set themselves to destroy it. The powers of the world were invoked to crush it. They imprisoned, they scourged and they killed. But it would not be suppressed! It grew! Chains were powerless; so was the lash; and so was the sword. What did it mean? To what would it grow? Men were perplexed.

Why could not beliefs and practices, superstitions and traditions be allowed to go on as they had been? Why this inconvenient overthrowing of the idols of the market place and the council chamber, the synagogue and the temple?

But it was a spiritual power. It was of God. To fight against it was to fight against God. It was the volcanic lava of the Gospel of Christ; and it must move forward with irresistible flow. The force behind it, driving it, was that of the Holy Spirit. It was God working actively in the world, inaugurating a new era of life. What wonder that men were perplexed concerning it, whereunto it would grow!

It was bound to grow. For life is the hall-mark of the Gospel. And life must manifest itself in growth. The new

kingdom spread because it was a living thing. It burst the old vessels in which religion had been confined. These were well enough for the static faith which the Jews held. Theirs was a cramping tradition on which was written the epitaph, *No change*. And incapacity for change means the rigidity of death. Put new wine in fresh wine-skins, else the skins must burst and the wine be spilled. For the Gospel is not static, but dynamic!

And the Faith of the Gospel, in proportion as it is true to the law of its being, has through the centuries manifested its life in growth. There has been growth in extension, as the Church has increased, now like the leaven working in the meal now like the volcanic flow of the lava.

But growth has also taken the form of adaptation to changing circumstances. The mode of presentation of the Gospel has changed with the changing categories of human thought and with the deepening insight into the Mind and Purpose of God, which has been gained through the continuous operation of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men. The outward form in which the spiritual content of the Gospel has been enshrined cannot always remain the same; it can never be allowed to become stereotyped. It is subject to evolution, as every living organism must be. Only so is it saved from becoming obsolete.

The rocks of the earth are sown with the fossil remains of creatures that have long been extinct. They followed a line of evolution in response to environment, and while doing so they developed and flourished. But they reached a stage when they were unable to make the change that changing conditions demanded. So in the struggle for existence they succumbed and disappeared. Perhaps they had become too highly differentiated; their development had been too specialized; their evolution had reached a point beyond which it could not progress to meet new needs. So it was that the prehistoric monsters of the slime had their day and disappeared.

Biology is rich with instruction and warning as to the evolution of religious belief and practice. The over-specialization of the dinosaur has its counterpart in the tendency to elaborate dogmatic belief. It suggests the impending nemesis, of which such a Church as that of Rome is in danger, with its growing

collection of incongruous dogmas accumulated through the centuries. At various epochs new dogmas have been added, in order to meet what seemed to be the need of the moment. So the creed of the Church of Rome has grown; and each addition has made a further barrier to the path of reconciliation with modern knowledge and thought. The result has been a very high degree of specialized development; but, in the language of organic evolution, it is not in correspondence with its environment. Can it survive? Will its destiny be that of the dinosaur, when the chasm between tradition and reality becomes too wide to be bridged by intelligent minds? Or will the vast reservoir of spiritual life, which ennobles numbers of her members, enable her to burst the banks of an outworn dogmatism and set her free for a new advance?

Evolutionary changes have been called for again and again in the history of the Church. Sometimes indeed the change, responsive to the need, has lagged behind the demand. This is the result of a certain innate conservatism in human nature, the reluctance to make changes. It may be compared to what is known as the 'wage-lag' in the world of industry. But when the desired movement is checked, the inevitable change, when it comes, is apt to be brought about with violence, through the very fact of its having been retarded. The new wine bursts the wine-skins that have become too rigid to expand.

So it was at the Reformation. The reforming spirit was held back, crushed and suppressed. Wycliffe's ashes were scattered far and wide. But sooner or later the Reformation was bound to come, for men's minds were moving. So it came! But, sad to say, in its violence it swept away much that the calmer minds of later days have learnt to regret. It is sad when men's obstinacy or self-will leads them, through fear of change, to strive to crush a movement of the Spirit of God. Then it is that human passions assert themselves and the work of God is hindered.

But whether with silent growth like the plant or in violence like the hurricane, the energy of life compels change, that advance may be made. Sometimes through timidity, sometimes in obstinacy, the old guard tries to check enthusiasm when the

call for change is sounded. They are perplexed concerning this, whereunto it will grow. But the challenge must be accepted. For life is at stake.

Life at the present day is changing more rapidly than ever. Progress is needed to keep pace with it. Else the Church will quickly get into a backwater, while the great stream of the national life sweeps by like a mill-race, leaving religious practice disdainfully alone.

Our services must be brought up to date, so as to express the aspirations and satisfy the needs of the time. Something has already been done in this direction. Psalms and lessons have been rearranged; we have been given the opportunity of making our public prayers more pointed and more real. Presently the National Assembly will give us a Revised Prayer Book, which will embody the spirit of the time. The note of reality must ring clear in our religion. We must get rid of old controversies over differences, which were no doubt live issues in the sixteenth or seventeenth century, but which now are dead and should be forgotten.

We have to rouse the interest and win the allegiance of that vast majority of the nation, who at present stand contemptuously or indifferently outside all organized religion. And to do this, we have to show that our concern is with the things that matter. It is with the vital truths that lie at the heart of the Christian Faith that we must busy ourselves. Nor must we be deterred, by the errors, defects or excesses of others, from keeping a due proportion in the Faith as we present it to our people. Our task is to express the truth as God has shown it to us. Outworn formulae must be sacrificed, if they are found to hinder a larger teaching of the Faith.

Catholicism stands before us, not as an achievement, but as an ideal. To penetrate further and further into the realm of universal truth must be the aim of our pilgrimage. But the Christian Faith, being mystical and transcendental, possesses reach beyond reach in its infinite content and implication. Its fulness can never be exhausted by human minds. But we can, if we will, advance in it, step by step, under the assured guidance of the Holy Spirit. We can strive to learn more clearly its meaning for our time, its message for our generation. It is

a glorious quest, but we shall need the humility and teachableness of little children if we are to follow it aright.

The pathway of progress will involve, as ever, growth and change. And many earnest souls, as they watch the strivings of Modern Churchmen, are perplexed concerning them whereunto this will grow. May it not grow towards a great renewal of faith and religious fervour in this our nation, and a triumphant assertion of our holy religion as the paramount consideration in life?

BOOK REVIEWS

OLD TESTAMENT CRITICISM*

English students of the Old Testament to whom German is not a familiar tongue, will be grateful to Prof. Peake and to Mr. Montgomery for presenting Dr. Sellin's *Introduction* in an English dress. This English dress is admirably made and indeed, by reason of additions made by the author himself, the book in this form is more valuable even than in the original.

But, it may be said, why another introduction? The answer is: Because:

(i). The last word has by no means yet been said upon the subjects dealt with under the head of Old Testament Introduction. Dr. Sellin, in fact, goes so far as to say that in this sphere there are at the present time 'a larger number of burning questions than at any earlier period.'

(ii) Dr. Sellin's discussion of these burning questions is acute, penetrating and original. A comparison of the three editions through which the book has passed in its German dress, shows how ready Dr. Sellin is to revise his opinions in the light of fresh study. In the second edition, the portions dealing with the Pentateuch and the historical books are largely recast, and in the third the section on the Minor Prophets (to use his own words) 'have undergone a far-reaching transformation,' and nearly every chapter shows additions and changes of various kinds.

(iii). Dr. Sellin presents a type of criticism which is not accessible otherwise to the English reader. He combines radical and conservative views. On the one hand he fully accepts the Grafian view as to the documentary sources from which the Pentateuch is made up and the periods at which these sources took their final shape. On the other hand, he believes that 'incomparably more early material is to be found, even in writings which received their final form at the hands of a relatively late redactor, than has long been assumed.' As Professor Peake well says: 'It is highly desirable that the British student who is limited to English should have before him an authoritative statement of this position.'

Dr. Sellin arrives at his position along two lines of study. First, the study of the history of the different forms of literature embedded as it were in the 'sources.' He takes up e.g. in succession the poetic, much of the

* *Introduction to the Old Testament.* By Dr. E. Sellin, Professor in the University of Berlin; translated by W. Montgomery, with an Introduction and a Bibliography for English readers by Professor Peake. (Hodder & Stoughton, 1923; 10/6).

legislative, and some of the narrative, portions of the Pentateuch. H regards almost all the poetic elements as much older than the prose source in which they are preserved. Lamech's Sword Song (Gen. iv. 23f.); th Oracles regarding Shem, Japhet and Canaan (Gen. ix. 25-27); the Oracl on the Patriarchs, Abraham (Gen. xii. 2f., 7, xiii. 14-17), Isaac (xxvi. 4 Jacob (xxvii. 27-29, xxviii. 13ff.), &c.; the Blessing of Jacob (Gen. xlix. the Song at the Red Sea (Ex. xv.); the short formulæ, such as that to b used at the taking up of the ark of the Covenant or of the Mosaic standar (Ex. xvii. 16), &c, &c.; the Balaam Oracles (Nu. xxiii. anl xxiv.); th Song of Moses and the Blessing of Moses (Deut. xxxii and xxxiii.) ar briefly passed under review and the background presupposed in them brought out.

When he comes to the legislative portions, he brings to bear anothe criterion of age—he places them 'in the framework of early Oriental litera ture, with special regard to the Babylonian and ancient Egyptian literature In view of the fact that Egyptians and Babylonians, 'from the very earlies times, summed up the demands of ethics and religion in short formulæ,' h claims that it is not unreasonable to accept the theory that the Decalogu in its simplest form is Mosaic. The Book of the Covenant (Ex. xx. 23- xxiii. 19) he believes originally stood before Deut. xxvii. and is, 'accordin to the Elohist, a law which was given by Moses shortly before the crossin of the Jordan, and was carved upon stones in the neighbourhood o Shechem (xxvii. 8, cf. Judg. ix. 46, Josh. xxiv. 25f). Sellin compares thi code with the code of Hammurabi and the Hittite laws, and considers tha 'the Israelite law-giver has not created an entirely new law out of nothing but has revised a code of laws which . . . was current throughout th whole of Western Asia, in the spirit of the revelation given to his peopl and in so doing has purified and deepened it.' In the same way he passe under review the so-called Yahwistic decalogue (Ex. xxxiv. 10-27), whic he regards as a confused medley of fragments from the Decalogue and th Book of the Covenant; the Shechem Decalogue (Deut. xxvii. 15-26); an the Law of Holiness (Lev. 17-26).

Finally he comes to the narrative portions of the Pentateuch, and h takes Gen. 14 as a clear example of how ancient materials, even som which had already attained a fixed literary form, were incorporated int the later sources.

Passing over his treatment of the sources known as J., E., and D we may note his treatment of the so-called Priestly writing. He regard it as bearing the impress of a single mind, but also as formed by the com bination of the most diverse materials. It was a priestly document worke up in Babylon about 500 B.C., combined with J.E.D., and promulgate by Ezra between 458 and 444 B.C. But now he asks: 'Whence and fro what period did the *materials* of this writing originally come?' To put hi answer in a nutshell, he regards the history as given by P. as an exili revision of a pre-exilic historical book of priestly origin, containing som materials which are very early and pre-prophetic, and attaining fixity o form as early as the period of the monarchy; he regards the laws of ritua as, for the most part, a codification of laws and usages which were in us long before the exile; and he even inclines to believe that 'the orientatio of the whole law to the Tabernacle and the description of it' may be 'a return to a sound historical tradition pushed aside for a time by th Temple . . .' but 'kept alive even during the Monarchy in Gideon-Mizpeh.

Enough has been said to show the fresh and interesting treatmen of Pentateuchal problems. The same holds good of his treatment of th

historical books, the prophets and the Sacred Writings. Page after page challenges attention and suggests possible new interpretations of well-known facts. Sometimes the theory is startling, as when he announces that 'the martyr, whose fate forms the subject of Zech. xi. 4-14, xiii. 7, xii. 9-17, is in reality none other than Moses'! Sometimes it seeks to rehabilitate matter 'which has long been rejected as unhistorical'—as e.g. additional matter in Chronicles, which 'has now, in virtue of our better knowledge of the ancient East, again come within the realm of historical possibility.' But always reasons are given in brief and references added where full discussion can be found, so that the student can arrive at conclusions for himself.

J. Battersby Harford.

THE ADVENTURE INTO THE UNKNOWN.*

Books of devotion are of different kinds. Some years ago we were walking with a philosopher, who as a young man had sat at the feet of Hermann Lotze in Göttingen. He spoke of the *Mikrokosmus,* and one of his sentences still lingers in the memory. 'Yes, indeed,' said he, 'it is undoubtedly his greatest work, and I find myself even to-day reading it in the way in which I believe some people make use of a book of devotion.' Again we remember a young man who, when he sought moral and spiritual strength for the toils and trials of life, always turned to Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus.* For others, Amiel's *Journal Intime*; for others Wordsworth's, or Shelley's, or Browning's poems, for others Plato's *Dialogues* and *Republic,* or the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, or Boethius' *De Consolatione* or Dante's *Divina Commedia,* or Tolstoi's *Short Stories* constitute their books of devotion: the spiritual wells whence they draw living water. But these, perhaps, are not the books of devotion of the vast multitude of those who profess and call themselves Christians. For them the Bible, especially the Psalter, serves that purpose, or the *Imitatio Christi,* or some favourite volume of sermons; it may be by Newman, or Spurgeon, or Robertson of Brighton. To such readers we would suggest that they should add another volume to their spiritual treasury. It is *The Adventure into the Unknown,* by Archdeacon R. H. Charles, of Westminster. It seems to us the best volume of sermons that has been published since the war. It appears in 'The Scholar as Preacher Series,' in which also appeared Dean Rashdall's *Christus in Ecclesia,* Dean Inge's *Faith and Knowledge,* Professor Gwatkin's *Eye for Spiritual Things.* The name of the series may suggest to the reader that knows it not that it is dry and difficult. On the contrary it is a standing proof that sound scholarship is no enemy to good preaching. Dr. Charles' latest contribution to the series is marked by freshness and fearlessness. It is the expression of intense convictions.

The first sermon deals with God's Call, and the message of the preacher is summed up in one sentence:

> 'If those who steadily refuse the call of God live sufficiently long, their life issues always in sheer tragedy.'

Humility is the most easily assumed of the Christian virtues, and seeing a sermon on it in this collection, we turn at once to it to test our preacher's quality. We find that he regards humility as the product of that fearless disinterestedness which comes from complete surrender to the Divine Will.

* *The Adventure into the Unknown.* By R. H. Charles, D.Litt., D.D. (T. and T. Clark, 1923.)

Hence it has nothing in common with obsequiousness, or timidity, or i sensibility to insult. Of himself its possessor thinks neither much n little. Hence John Knox, 'who never feared the face of man,' was, li Moses, one of 'the meekest of men,' although he had not the mildest manners. Another sermon on a well-worn theme catches our eye. Wh has the preacher to say of 'The Wicked Husbandmen'? Here he dea prophetically with the misuse of privileges, whether by communitie classes, or corporations. But he does not confine himself safely to vag generalities, but fearlessly applies his principles to the industrial world to-day. Another equally fearless sermon deals with Neutrality. This co tains a valuable definition of the relations of physical science to religio faith. Dr. Charles writes:

> 'The task of physical science is to discover *that which is* in t realm of nature, not *that which should be* in the world of moral a spiritual beings: to accumulate and classify all the facts that cor under the observation of the senses; not to determine their charact for good or ill . . . It does not pronounce, nor can it pretend to pr nounce, on the goodness or badness of any fact or process it brin to light. It is thus wholly incompetent to deal from its limited ou look with the moral and spiritual worlds that transcend its provinc But though physical science cannot deal with the ultimate truths religious faith, it can make some contribution, but this contribution negative rather than positive. Its chief service is to free the hum mind from credulities, superstitions, and self-delusions' (p. 268).

But the chief contribution to Christian thought in this volume is a s of four sermons on Forgiveness. These we could almost wish had be published as a separate volume that they might receive the attention th deserve. The problem of forgiveness—not only how to gain it, but ho and when to grant it—besets moral beings at every turn. If we adopt t rule, 'Never forgive,' or reject it, and take as our motto, 'Forgive alway we may do grievous wrong both to others and to ourselves. There is, Archdeacon Charles points out, a forgiveness which is treason to righteou ness, and is merely a form of self-indulgence. Equally is there a refusal forgive which is treason to the Divine love. H.D.A.M.

THE PROBLEM OF THE APOCALYPSE.*

Archbishop Benson told the story of a man who was once asked wh impression was left on his mind after reading the Apocalypse: his answ came pat—'Chaos.' And this is perhaps not altogether surprising. F an ordinary reader, unfamiliar with Jewish apocalyptic literature a study this strange, enigmatic book is apt to beget nothing but confusion. T intellectual atmosphere in which it lives and moves and has its being is far removed from anything with which he is even remotely familiar, th he feels quite unable to unravel its meaning or follow its train of thoug though he may be conscious enough of its imaginative power and deep moved by many a passage of unearthly beauty. If, to guide him throu the maze, such a reader has recourse to popular elucidations of the Apoc lypse, his surprise may be deepened to awe, but the puzzle will rema unsolved. From the earliest times till the present day this book has be the mine from which the oddest doctrines have been hewn, the arsen from which eager theological disputants have borrowed weird weapo

* *The Apocalypse of St. John.* By Canon Glazebrook. (London: John Murray, 192 6/-.) Vol. VI of the 'Modern Churchman's Library.'

both of offence and defence. Within the past three hundred years, from Joseph Mede to Robert Govett, the Apocalypse has been the happy hunting ground for doctrinal faddists of every complexion. Elliott, in his once celebrated *Horae Apocalypticae,* saw in the pages of it a foreshortened record of all the Christian centuries; others, discarding this theory, which is *a priori* unlikely and *a posteriori* impracticable (unless violence be done to history) have found the 'key' to the book's secret only in a futurist interpretation; for them it is an account of what will be hereafter, not of events that have taken or are taking place in the world. Others again—but they are not numerous—have discovered in the book a more or less faithful description of what happened during the early days of a persecuted Church—a veiled history of a distressful epoch. It is, in short, a great cryptogram, the full meaning of which could be known only to contemporary readers. In other words, the Apocalypse is a Tract for the Times.

These critics, as we now believe, were on the right track; but even they did not comprehend the significance of the book in its entirety. It has been left for a writer of our own day to elucidate the mystery of its origin, and interpret the work in the light of Jewish Apocalyptic. That writer is Dr. Charles, who, a little more than three years ago, produced what is already generally admitted to be one of the most able pieces of exegesis that has been seen in our generation. His previous studies—beginning with his epoch-making edition of *Enoch*—have perfectly qualified him to deal with the last and grandest of all apocalypses. But his volumes are far too learned and technical to be of much use to any but advanced students. Average students could hardly be expected to dig out for themselves the true meaning of so baffling a work as *The Revelation of John the Divine*. But now there is no excuse for neglecting the book; for Canon Glazebrook comes forward as a guide to the unlearned, and in a volume of singular clarity acts as *cicerone* to all and sundry who, wandering through the great gallery of precious things assembled by Dr. Charles, would fain understand the significance of those wonderful pictures of Time and Eternity which hang upon the walls thereof.

In a brief and modest preface Canon Glazebrook states that his object is 'to set forth the main results which Archdeacon Charles has attained, and to show what follows from them.' At the same time he is not a mere follower of Charles, some of whose conclusions he finds himself unable to accept. It might perhaps have been well had he struck out more decisively on a path of his own; but that was not altogether his purpose. Within the rather strict limits he set himself, Canon Glazebrook has written a book which, if we mistake not, will rank high among popular expositions of the Apocalypse. Though popular in style and easy to follow, it bears on every page the imprint of careful thought and refined scholarship. The exposition is pellucidly clear.

The volume consists of eighteen chapters, which are followed by the text of the A.V. We believe that the writer has done wisely to utilize the A.V., whose familiar cadences more than atone for occasional inaccuracy. But it is not quite the A.V. of our Bibles, for in several places an amended version is given; but the reader can at once tell where the change has been made, as all 'corrections' are in italics. The order of some verses and chapters has been altered; thus chapters 7, 10, 11, 12, 14 are printed after the 'Epilogue' (chap. 21) as a sort of appendix. These changes of order are, of course, only conjectural, and are due originally to Dr. Charles—who, however, may not succeed in carrying other scholars with him in the matter.

In one or two places we venture to think Canon Glazebrook has followed Dr. Charles only too loyally, e.g. in chap. 21 (v. 13), where we read 'the *treasuries* gave up the dead,' instead of 'the *sea.*' This alteration is arbitrary; there is no hint in the MSS. of any other reading than θάλασσα, and the word should be kept, the exegesis following the reading; the reading should not be changed to suit the exegesis.

In attempting a solution of that *quaestio vexata,* the authorship of the book, Dr. Charles adopts the theory that the *Apostle* John was killed at an early period; hence there could be no question of his being the author of the Apocalypse. The hypothesis is not convincing to most scholars; the evidence in its favour, though it must be weighed and duly taken into account, appears weak.

One of the most distinguished of living theologians writes thus:* 'I do not think any healthy literary criticism would permit such an elaborate theory of triplication of Johns, and of transpositions, and incompetent redactors. Assuming an editor (a highly improbable thing), there can be little doubt that he could not have been so utterly incompetent and ridiculous as Charles makes him out to be. The supposition is impossible.' There we must leave it. It is among the pleasures and advantages of learning that it gives scope for discussion on points of interest and relevance arising out of ancient texts.

We cannot close this brief notice without thanking Canon Glazebrook for lightening the burden of preachers, students, and readers generally, by his admirably concise and luminous exposition. His book should do for Englishmen what Professor Case's book (1920) has done for Americans—that is, not only interest them in a profoundly important piece of literature, but enable them to understand, better than before, something of its deep and impressive message. For a message it *has,* and a vital one, for our own tormented days, as it had for the sorely tried churches to which it was first addressed. What seemed once but a Tract for the Times has proved, and will still prove, a Message for the Ages. E.H.B.

* In a letter to the present reviewer.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE MALINES CONFERENCES.

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman.*

Sir,

It has been a real shock to me to read your editorial comments on the Malines Conversations, but possibly it may not be wholly vain to point out that your attempt to condemn free discussion of theological differences is treachery to the first principles of Liberalism. Your contention appears to be that such discussion must not be permitted with those whose theological views differ most widely from your own: in their case denunciation and anathema must take its place. Some of us are concluding that the difference between certain Modernists and certain rigid champions of tradition is not such a very great gulf after all. They both prefer abuse to frank and charitable discussion; and with both the motive to be inferred is fear.

Oliver C. Quick.

The Abbey,
Carlisle.
26th January, 1924.

[We should be as shocked as Canon Quick if we felt that our comments on the Malines Conferences had given the impression that we are against free discussion, but we see no more ground for such a charge than if it were claimed that the Labour Party is against the free discussion of international difficulties because it has voiced its strong objection to secret diplomacy. Whilst acknowledging in our comments the right of the Primate to sanction these conversations we have felt bound to express an urgent wish that they may be terminated as soon as possible; and that for four reasons: (1) They are alarming large numbers of Evangelicals and Free Churchmen; (2) they are giving false hopes to our Rome-sick Anglicans, and are thereby encouraging the Romeward and mediæval tendency of the English Church; (3) they seem to suggest to those who are outside organized Christianity and are hostile to it, that organized Christianity is interested, not in the great moral, social, and spiritual duties, but in ecclesiastical trifles; (4) the conversations are bound to prove futile, in view of the Papacy being unwilling, or, as it would say, *unable* to make any concessions on the main issues.

When the Papacy has declined to send representatives to the World Conference on Faith and Order, is it likely to have sent representatives to confer with Canterbury *with the object of reunion?* In view of that refusal we find it impossible, until we have a full statement, to know what is the status of the Roman ecclesiastics conferring at Malines.

We had the privilege of listening, in Ripon Hall, a few months ago to a brilliant paper by Father Woodlock, S.J., dealing with the respective ecclesiastical positions of Rome, Constantinople, and Canterbury, in view of the negotiations and discussions following on the Lambeth Conference; and none who heard him (and he was followed with close attention) could be at all mistaken as to the Roman attitude and policy. There were a number of Roman Catholic ecclesiastics and laymen present, and nothing was said by any one of them which conflicted in the least degree with the uncompromising utterances of the Jesuit Father. May we venture to recall one remark of his, which, with others, fixed itself in our memory? It was that Rome is better understood by English Modernists than by Anglo-Catholics.

To prevent misapprehension we ought to add that this 'conversation' took place without the 'friendly cognizance' of Pope and Primate.

—Ed. *M.C.*]

Sir,

CHURCHMEN'S UNION PAMPHLETS.

The first set of pamphlets authorized by the Publications Committee of the Churchmen's Union are in the press, and will appear by the end of February. They are of an introductory character; to be followed by others. The first treats of the question, 'What is Modernism?' the second comprises quotations from various writers of authority, selected by Mr. Powell, as to 'Modernism and Reconstruction,' the third is a reprint of Mr. Bagenal's brief history of the modern movement in the English Church, which appeared in the *Hibbert Journal*, the fourth, by myself, deals with modernity in Christian Ethics. I have acted as editor to the series, and shall be glad to receive suggestions as to further papers. Mr. Russell is editing another series. These pamphlets may be had by members of the Society from its office, at Church House, Westminster, at the following rates: Nos. 1 and 2, 3*d.* each, postage ½*d.*; Nos. 3 and 4, 4*d.* each, postage ½*d.* The four together, price a shilling; post free, 2*d.* more.

P. Gardner.

A POINT IN THE GREY BOOK CANON.

SIR,

Your criticism of a sentence in the Grey Book Canon carries weight There is time yet to amend the sentence, and this should not prove to difficult. The following way of doing so is suggested for consideration It is at least scriptural, and adds a little emphasis to an aspect of th sacrament which is not disputed, but is perhaps less prominent than th proportion of truth would make it. 'Our eschatological controversies can hardly be thought to exclude the three actual words of St. Paul, whic we have much good reason to retain.

'All glory be to thee . . . . for that thou . . . . didst give thine onl Son . . . ; Who made thereby his one offering of himself, once offered, full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, *conse crating himself that with him we may be consecrated in truth; for whic cause we do proclaim his death till he come. For* in the same night . . . *he* took bread . . . .'

E. P. BOYS-SMITH.

HORDLE VICARAGE,
January, 1924.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BASIS OF CONFESSION.

SIR,

I have been deeply interested by both the letters on Confession whic you have printed and it occurred to me that a few notes from one wh approaches the subject from a side rather different from those emphasize on the one hand by 'a Life-Member of the E.C.U.' and on the other b Mr. Fawkes might have a certain value in this discussion. What I writ must be based entirely on my own personal experience, which I will stat as briefly as possible. I was given, as a boy, an ordinary Public Scho Religious Education. I went up to the University (in the early ninetie never so much as having heard of 'Private Confession' as a possibility i the Church of England. I had at that time formed a desire to be ordaine but had already begun to specialize in Natural Science and so proceede to read for the Natural Science Tripos, at Cambridge. In doing so found what I thought was my Religion completely undermined, and but f the generous influence of a distinguished scientist, who recently contribute an article to your own pages, I should have probably abandoned all religiou observances. As it was, I gradually began to find a faith to replace th one I had lost and eventually went to a Theological College with a view t testing my vocation to Holy Orders. There, for the first time in my lif I was taught that Confession held a distinctive and recognized place in th teaching and practice of the Church of England: that in regard to its u the Church allowed absolute freedom to each one of her children: that, all events for some souls, it was, if not an absolute necessity, at least recognized 'means of grace': that as I should almost certainly be call upon to hear Confessions I ought at least seriously to consider the questio of whether I should use the practice myself.

All of this was so entirely new to me that at first I was filled wi astonishment. Then, as I thought the matter over, three thoughts (ve likely they came to me through my teachers—that I cannot remembe began to weigh with me. (1) I began to realize that though there was sense in which I could take for my own the words of the Psalmist, 'Agai

thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight,' yet when I looked into it I could see that for all my sins my fellow men suffered, either directly or indirectly. If then, I asked myself, it is necessary and right to confess to God, surely it is necessary and right to confess also to man. And, since it was obviously impossible to confess to all the individuals I had injured by my sin, might it not be that the Church was right in appointing certain representative individuals to whom I could make my confession? (2) Again, I asked myself why it was that it should be so much easier for me to kneel down in my own room and confess 'to God alone' than I felt it would be to confess to Him in the presence of a priest. Was not this one way in which I could take up my cross for His sake who bore the Cross for me? (3) I was passionately eager to enter upon my Ministry with an assurance that I was as fully prepared as I could be: that I had omitted nothing which would help to fit me for a position of such great responsibility as Priesthood in the Church seemed to me to entail. It was a long time before I could come to any decision. I was a Protestant of the Protestants. I had a deeply ingrained dislike and distrust of 'Popery.' But the more I thought, the more strongly I began to feel that I ought to go—greatly as I dreaded the ordeal. I remember going and talking the matter over with my Principal, who, rightly enough, refused to decide for me. I remember very well his quoting the Psalmist: 'I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou hast set my heart at liberty.' The object of confession, he said, was to set the heart at liberty. If my heart was at rest there was no need for me to go.

My heart, I decided, had not been 'set at liberty,' so at last I made up my mind to go. I can never to my dying day forget the experience. I went to Confession with a heavy heart. I think that first Confession made a greater demand on my courage than anything else in my life, even in the War. But I doubt whether anyone ever came away from Confession with a lighter heart. The radiant happiness of the conclusion of that day comes back to me now—twenty-five years later—with extraordinary vividness. I have never had one moment's doubt or one moment's regret about that first Confession, and I have not now. And for many years I continued to go to Confession from time to time, but I never experienced anything like the sense of relief, of a gift of new life, which that first Confession and the Absolution I received, brought me.

Naturally, with such an experience as this of Confession, I preached Confession to others with an intense conviction and though for many years my Ministry was served in parishes where Confession had no prominent place in the teaching given—in fact can hardly have been said to be taught at all, I began after a few years to hear Confessions myself. Later I found my services in demand as a Missioner, and on these occasions I began to hear large numbers of Confessions, practically all of them first Confessions, many of them marked with the same intense reality which I hope (and believe) marked my own first Confession. During all these years I regarded and taught Confession not as an obligation laid upon her children by the Church but as a blessed medicine for sick souls.

After some years I was called to work in London and there, for the first time, I began to have experience of hearing Confessions in Churches where it had come to be regarded as part of the normal routine of the Christian life. Before the great Festivals I (and other priests) sat for hours hearing Confessions.

But very soon I became aware that this was a very different thing from Confession as I had known it. Many of the 'penitents' seemed to me to

confess in the most perfunctory manner. Many of the Confessions were concerned simply with the breaking of arbitrary rules and had no real relation either to sin or to penitence (as I understood it) at all. Many of the 'penitents' were plainly the worse rather than the better for Confession. In many it seemed to me to be increasing the natural tendency to morbid introspection. In many to be leading to an unhealthy over-scrupulosity.

In the meantime, though I continued to make my own Confession, the distinction between the sins which could be confessed and sin as an essentially indescribable condition of the soul became clearer. Those questions which Mr. Fawkes formulates so cogently, 'Can interior acts be brought under external categories? Can we really think that the categorical enumeration of sins, with their distinguishing circumstances is possible?' and so on—these questions forced themselves home upon me.

And as I gained more and more experience I was driven to the following conclusions:

(1) There are many men—but fewer women—for whom Confession would probably be intensely valuable *at a certain stage in their spiritual growth,* but they ought, sooner or later, in all normal cases to outgrow it.

(2) There are many men—and more women—for whom Confession as a regular practice becomes definitely harmful.

(3) Both the Roman and the Anglican teaching (taking the view of the Prayer Book, that Confession is to be regarded as a medicine for special cases rather than as part of the normal discipline of the Christian) have something to be said for them. The Roman avoids an unhealthy excitement to which sometimes—but not by any means always—the Anglican falls a victim, but on the other hand the very exceptionalness of the Anglican use may, and often does, give a depth and reality to Confession—especially to a first Confession by an adult—which is lost when Confession has been a regular practice from very early years.

(4) I am quite certain that an honest and thorough Confession to a wise priest does resolve complexes and remove intolerable burdens in numberless instances. I myself have known lives completely transformed through Sacramental Confession and I am certain that it does meet a real psychological need in many cases.

(5) While I agree with Mr. Fawkes that the exercise of this priestly function is often more truly the prerogative of those 'born priests' who never take Holy Orders, than of those who have been ordained, yet where a priest is one who has taken Orders because he has found his true vocation in the ever-growing experience of dealing with individual souls, which the fact of his priesthood brings him, and the fact that he is known as one whose duty and privilege it is to help souls in need, does really make him fitter than most men to receive the confidences of, and bestow Absolution upon those who are oppressed by the burden of sin.

May I then sign myself

A MODERNIST CONFESSOR?